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Entangled Histories of the Balkans

Volume Four:
Concepts, Approaches, and (Self-)Representations

Edited by

Roumen Daskalov
Diana Mishkova
Tchavdar Marinov
Alexander Vezenkov

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Preface

The present volume is the last in the *Entangled Balkans* series and marks the end of several years of research guided by the transnational, "entangled history" and *histoire croisée* approaches. The essays in this volume address theoretical and methodological issues of Balkan or Southeast European regional studies—not only questions of scholarly concepts, definitions, and approaches but also the extra-scholarly, ideological, political, and geopolitical motivations that underpin them. These issues are treated more systematically and by a presentation of their historical evolution in various national traditions and schools. Some of the essays deal with the articulation of certain forms of "Balkan heritage" in relation to the geographical spread and especially the cultural definition of the "Balkan area." Concepts and definitions of the Balkans are thus complemented by (self-)representations that reflect on their "cultural" foundations.

The introductory essay (by Roumen Daskalov) presents an overview of the various approaches to the Balkans, starting with the older descriptions in terms of geography, culture, or mentalities, through the conceptualization of the Balkans as a historical region with a *longue durée* structure, to more recent approaches in terms of legacies and discourses (including the negative ones, known as "Balkanisms"). The merits and disadvantages of the various approaches are demonstrated by entering into the discussions and critiques they provoked. Among the typical pitfalls are essentialization, political instrumentalization, and geopolitics, which mar, albeit subtly, some of the newer approaches as well. The essay ends by advocating the transnational and relational ("connected history," "entangled history," and *histoire croisée*) approaches, which do not commit one to an ontological understanding of the region, whether in terms of traits or structures or even legacies, but allow the researcher to move freely and explore various exchanges and entanglements both within and outside the region, thus going beyond regionalism.

The next contribution (by Diana Mishkova) deals with the academic knowledge production and scholarly discourses about the Balkans (also known as Balkan studies or Balkanology), which originated in various academic and disciplinary subcultures inside and outside the region, with special attention to their ideological and (geo-)political underpinnings. The study of the Balkanist (extra-scholarly) dimensions of Balkan scholarship, or what the author calls "academic Balkanisms," complements work on Balkanist and post-colonial discourses but also qualifies it by reversing the perspective and placing at the center of discussion the "self-representations" of the region with the resources

of scholarship. In the process, special attention is paid to the intricate relationship and intermixtures between national and regional modalities of representation. As Mishkova shows, there were in fact different intra-regional and extra-regional Balkanisms, each endorsing its own "mental maps" and symbolic geographies, pursuing its own political-ideological agendas, and promoting specific interests and strategies. On a certain level, this demonstration underscores the strong connections between political and scholarly regionalizations, but on another level, it lays bare the inherent politics and power of scholarly concepts of producing spaces, cognitive maps, and political realities.

The construction of the Balkans/Southeastern Europe as a region with fixed boundaries and bounded territory is addressed by Alexander Vezenkov. Rather than trying to define these boundaries himself, he presents the fluctuations in the understanding of these boundaries over time by revealing the considerations and motives behind such understandings. Moreover, the author problematizes the very possibility of conceiving the Balkans geographically as peninsular (and thus as a "natural given"). In a broader context, this conception hinged on viewing Europe as a continent, which was not a "natural given" either. The Balkans, in its most widely agreed-upon and present territorial definition, is revealed as the heir of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century "Turkey in Europe." Vezenkov also comments on the rationale of conceiving the Balkans as "opening up" to other areas—Central Europe, the Mediterranean, and more recently, the Black Sea and especially the Near East (in this case also by problematizing the concept of the "Balkan city"). The concept of the Balkans as a region is challenged by Vezenkov in yet another way—as a function of communications that allow for, or impede, contacts and exchanges within the region and with the outside world. As demonstrated, before the railways, even the main roads were neglected, and connections by water (especially after the advent of steam navigation) were faster and more secure than those by land. As a result, ports were better connected to the outside world (particularly Western Europe) than to the interior of the Ottoman Empire, while connections between far-apart inland towns were particularly slow and difficult. The idea that the Balkans were more open to the outside and less internally unified in terms of communication and exchanges is an even more radical way to challenge the regional concept, though the author exercises caution in his conclusions.

The geopolitical construction of space has been practiced not only with regard to "the Balkans" as a whole but also on a smaller scale. In his chapter, Constantin Iordachi discusses a particular case of geopolitical construction of a sub-region in the Balkans: Dobrudja, divided since 1878 into a northern part (in Romania) and southern part (in Bulgaria). Iordachi shows precisely how the

definition of Dobrudja took shape in the disputes between the European Great Powers and the subsequent political and military entanglements of Romania and Bulgaria in defending their "historical rights" over the region. Iordachi's study of Dobrudja completes our previous research on historically contested regions in the Balkans, such as Macedonia and Thrace; it also offers an apt geopolitical contextualization of Roumen Daskalov's work on Romanian-Bulgarian historiographical polemics in the third volume of the series. In Iordachi's work, the emphasis is placed on public diplomacy—a phenomenon of the modern and contemporary era related to the development of a transnational public sphere trying to exercise pressure on state factors of international politics. Iordachi also draws on approaches of "critical geopolitics," involving research on infrastructural expansion, techniques of governmentality, and the history of technology.

The history of technology is at the core of Andreas Lyberatos's work on timekeeping in the Ottoman Balkans. His chapter appropriately complements the studies of the definition and construction of (Balkan) space in the present volume, with an insight into the time perception and the social construction of temporality. Lyberatos devotes special attention to the systems of time-measuring (*alaturka* and *alafranga*) and the different timekeeping practices existing in the Balkans during the Ottoman era. The diffusion and the use of various kinds of clock mechanisms and devices—from clock towers to watches—is studied in his chapter with regard to technologies but also to social practices as well as perceptions and representations. Thus Lyberatos studies the way Ottoman and/or Balkan timekeeping has been exoticized vis-à-vis the West—by observers perceiving the flow of time there as different from that in Europe, because of the different way of measuring time in the Ottoman Empire and the different rhythm of life related to it. In the quasi-colonial gaze, the Balkans seem to have lived in and according to a different time. Drawing on post-colonial approaches, Lyberatos analyzes the genesis of clichés about the "immobile East" that were abundantly used for the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire as a whole.

The next two chapters (by Ada Hajdu and Tchavdar Marinov) expand on the perception and scholarly interpretations, visual representations, and nationalist uses of architectural heritage in the Balkans. They are complementary to those dealing with concepts and definitions of "the Balkans," as these definitions approach the "Balkan area" not only as a geographical space but also as a hotbed of specific "traditions," legacies, and forms of cultural heritage. In fact, the theories/ideas and representations of heritage relate in yet another way to the validity of definitions of "the Balkans" as a specific "area," to issues of regional (cultural) "unity" and spatial delimitation.

Ada Hajdu deals with the theories of the "Byzantine style" in architecture and with the constructions of a neo-Byzantine architectural design in nineteenth-and-early-twentieth-century Southeast Europe (Serbia, Greece, Romania, Moldova in the Habsburg context, and Bulgaria). Tchavdar Marinov analyzes the interpretations and the nationalist uses of the vernacular house architecture from the Ottoman era in all countries of the region, from Bosnia to modern Turkey—a process that started by the beginning of the twentieth century and is still not finished. Both chapters reconstruct the ways in which the two forms of architectural heritage—Byzantine and Ottoman—have been appropriated and mobilized in the Balkan countries for the construction of particular national visual identities and architectural idioms known as "national styles." While Romanian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek, and other architects and designers have sought to codify and apply "purely" national forms of architecture, they often used the same references to the same monuments of the past and thus came up with similar and even identical solutions.

Ironically, the divergence characterizing the quest of national identity in architecture and visual arts resulted in a convergence. Ada Hajdu and Tchavdar Marinov demonstrate how the particular ideas of Balkan theorists of architecture were shaped in a similar way by theories of Byzantine, "Oriental," and vernacular architecture, as well as by an experience in the field of modern "national styles" coming from Western and Central Europe, and also from Russia. At the same time, they show the connections and mutual influences between the Balkan cases: how, for instance, the theories of Byzantine architecture traveled around the Balkans or how the interpretations of Greek "traditional architecture" influenced other national scholarly contexts and architectural practices while, in turn, being shaped by those.

The entangled history of Balkan "national architectures" proposed in these chapters complements other studies in the present research project. Ada Hajdu's chapter provides an artistic pendant and architectural reflection of the historiographical appropriations of the Byzantine legacy discussed by Diana Mishkova in the third volume of the series. Tchavdar Marinov's study provides similar contextualization of the constructions of Balkan identity in scholarly debates inside the region analyzed in the present volume by Roumen Daskalov and Diana Mishkova. Most importantly, both Hajdu's and Marinov's chapters contribute to the questioning of the "natural" borders of the Balkans in Alexander Vezenkov's study. In reality, both the Byzantine cultural heritage and the vernacular house architecture of the Ottoman era clearly exceed the geographical borders of the Balkans—a fact that makes the symbolic "nationalization" of these forms of heritage as absurd as their treatment as strictly

Balkan features. Marinov's chapter is also related to the debates over the definition of a "Balkan city" discussed in Vezenkov's contribution.

The volume concludes with another case study of a visual representation of the past—not of historical heritage and identity but of a particular traumatic moment of contemporary history. In her work, Rossitza Guentcheva analyzes in a comparative manner representations of the Holocaust in exhibitions at the Auschwitz memorial as well as in museums of Jewish history. Guentcheva focuses on the evolution of these representations and of the related narratives in cases of Southeast European countries such as Bulgaria and Greece against the background of global re-articulations of the memory of the Holocaust. This entails the abandoning of the strictly national frames into which this tragic period of contemporary history has been initially presented—or, rather, dissimulated. Guentcheva's analysis sheds light on the regimes of visualization of the Holocaust, especially in the case of former socialist countries such as Bulgaria, where the construction of a particular memory of Jewish suffering was obstructed by the domination of an official narrative glorifying the communist partisan resistance, itself inscribed in the longer continuity of a strictly national history. While the representation of the Holocaust in Bulgarian exhibitions never actually happened, Greece is an example of a recent approach to the legacy of the Holocaust more "attuned" to its global memorialization. A comparison is made with the design of the Hungarian exhibition at the Auschwitz memorial. Rossitza Guentcheva's chapter deals with a problem we had not previously addressed and opens up our research to issues of the memory of traumatic experiences in contemporary European and global history—another way of transcending the region.

Studies of the Balkans were long preoccupied with the representations of the region in the Western imaginary. This problematic also reappeared in our project, but we also tried to address more systematically the equally important and often underestimated problem of self-representation (especially in Diana Mishkova's contribution to this volume). Intellectuals and institutions from the region (or, more accurately, from the individual countries in the region) had their own agendas in trying to forge and popularize a positive image of the region and their respective countries. Questions regarding self-representation appear more explicitly in the cases of the "national house" (Marinov), the pavilions representing individual Balkan countries at universal and other international exhibitions (Hajdu), and the national exhibitions at the Auschwitz memorial (Guentcheva).

At the end of our journey, some acknowledgements are in order. The text was copyedited as usual by Chris Springer, to whom we owe the deepest

gratitude for his dedicated and competent work and for his patience. Finally, our biggest thanks go to the European Research Council for its generous advanced research grant (Grant Agreement No. 230177) under the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme (FP/2007–2013), which made this exploration of the entangled paths of Balkan history possible.

The Editors

Note on Transliteration

In this collective volume, we use several different systems to transliterate Cyrillic scripts. For Macedonian and Serbian, we follow the commonly accepted Latin transliteration of these languages, which involves the usage of special characters with diacritics (such as *č*, *š* and *ž* for the Cyrillic letters *ч, ш* and *ж* respectively). In Serbian, which is officially written both in Cyrillic and in Latin, the principles of transliteration are very strict. In Macedonian, there is room for some hesitation, for instance about the letters *ќ* and *ѓ*. We adopted for them the digraphs *kj* and *gj*, instead of *ć* and *đ*, which are often used but reflect Serbian rather than Macedonian pronunciation.

However, the system with diacritics is not typical of the Latinization of Bulgarian and Russian scripts. For them we use English-derived digraphs (*ch* for *ч*, *sh* for *ш*, *zh* for *ж* and *ts* for *ц*). The *y* stands for the *ŭ* in Bulgarian and in Russian, but also for the *ы* in Russian Cyrillic: a small inconvenience triggered by our preference for a more practical "English" transliteration. Accordingly, the *ю* and *я* are transliterated as *yu* and *ya*. The Russian soft sign (*ь*) is denoted with an apostrophe (’). This system seems to be the most popular one for these languages and, at least in Bulgaria, it is currently favored by law. However, as the same system does not distinguish between the vowel *a* and the *schwa* (*ə*), we use the character *ă* for the latter (namely, for what is *ъ* in the Bulgarian Cyrillic).

The principles of Latin transliteration of the Greek script are also far from obvious. We abandoned both the classicist transliteration in an Ancient Greek manner (for instance, *η* Latinized as *e*) and the hypertrophic imitation of the modern Greek phonetics (with, for instance, the digraph *dh* for *δ*). We tried to follow a middle road. For instance, *η* is transliterated as *i*, but the ancient diphthongs *αι*, *ει* and *οι* are denoted by *ai*, *ei* and *oi*. Although this does not reflect the modern pronunciation, it makes possible some visual recognition of the Greek form, which would otherwise be difficult with the introduction of *e*, *i* and *i* respectively.

Of course, we have retained the spelling of well-known geographical names (such as *Sofia* instead of "Sofiya").

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CHAPTER 1

The Balkans: Region and Beyond

Roumen Daskalov

Balkan[1] history has followed various courses and taken various shapes at different eras, and the studies that deal with it have attempted to make sense of it in different ways. There are the ubiquitous metaphors of a "crossroads" or "powderkeg" or a "battlefield" of civilizations. Some authors have seen ghosts of ancient hatreds haunting the region;[2] others sought to show that such apparitions were largely imaginary. Some were concerned with drawing the borders of the region and defining its unity and distinctiveness, while others went in pursuit of an evasive human species—*Homo balcanicus*.

The region was most often seen in the prevailing positivist spirit of the times as solidly existing "in here" or "out there," at least in geographical and cultural terms. Yet it was being constructed or imagined in a variety of ways and for various purposes by the same people (observers both outside and within) who thought it to be hard reality and a fact of life. The Balkans also functioned as a political project of unification and an utopian vision of the future, whether in counteracting actual political fragmentation and rivalries between neighboring nation-states or in opposing external pressures from Great Powers. The region (defined politically or culturally) was projected back in time to different eras, in spite of general agreement that the name "Balkans" originated with the German geographer Johan August Zeune in 1808 and that the Balkans were primarily a Byzantine and Ottoman legacy. The diagnoses of the actual state of the region and the prognoses of its future also vary. Some see it as almost obsolete (because it was an Ottoman legacy) and a remnant of a perception rather than as reality. Others are more sanguine about its future.

This book, the fourth and last volume of *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, marks the end of an exploration of Balkan history that began several years ago. Some sort of recapitulation is needed, and at least some "conclusions" should

1 In the following essay I will mostly use the term "Balkans" for the region and sometimes "Southeastern Europe" (when presenting an author who uses this term). I am aware of the various value stakes around these concepts (but refuse to play this game). I also realize that some authors use "the Balkans" to refer to a narrower space (bordering on the Danube to the north) and "Southeastern Europe" to refer to a wider region.

2 Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History* (New York: St. Martin's, 1993).

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be drawn. It would be futile to try to summarize some two thousand pages, and the themes of each volume were laid out in the prefaces. What would be more meaningful is to position this research project within the scholarship of the region, both old and new, and to explain its assumptions and methodological tools as well as its preferences and choices in dealing with the topics.

Geography, Culture, Mentalities

There are various attempts to define and approach the Balkans as a region and an object of study. These entail implicit or explicit assumptions about what they are or are not and have affinities with certain methodologies. What seems obvious is that a region must have geographical boundaries to delimit it. It should also present an internal (cultural) unity of a kind or at least have a degree of coherence, classically described in terms of common or shared "traits" (or features) that differentiate it from other places. In brief, (self-)identity presupposes alterity. The epistemology that goes with that is one of "subject" (the scholar) and his/her "object" of study, approached with the idea of studying it "objectively," that is, without personal bias.

In older indigenous scholarship, the Balkans were approached and defined in different ways. The Bulgarian ethnographer and literary scholar Ivan Shishmanov saw them as a space of intensive borrowings and resulting commonalities (folklore in particular). The Serb (anthropo)geographer Jovan Cvijić saw them as intersecting and partly overlapping cultural or civilizational spaces shaped by the natural environment and by historical (civilizational) factors and inhabited by specific psychological or personality types. The Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga saw them as a space of shared civilizational legacies resulting in similar institutions. The Croat historian Petar Skok and the Serb historian Milan Budimir saw them as a similar way of life and mentalities forged especially in the imperial Ottoman framework and under Ottoman impact.[3] Admittedly, the unity is only relative, and in the case of Cvijić, it is actually fragmented.

Among older, especially interwar, foreign scholarship, German and Austrian scholars showed particularly strong interest in the Balkans, and their *Südostforschung* deserves special treatment.[4] They tried to delimit the penin-

3 For a more extensive treatment, see the contribution of Diana Mishkova in this volume.

4 On the history of the *Südostforschung*, see Fritz Valjavec, "Der Werdegang der deutschen Südostforschung und ihr gegenwärtiger Stand. Zur Geschichte und Methodik," *Südost-Forschungen* 6, nos. 1–2 (1941): 1–37; Georg Stadtmüller, "Die Entwicklung der deutschen

sula from a geographical and geo-morphological point of view, particularly by looking for "natural" borders (such as seas, rivers, and mountains). While seas surround the peninsula from the south, the east, and the west, the northern border was an issue of controversy. Most often the Danube, the Sava, and the Kupa were accepted as a northern border. Yet Hungary and Slovakia were also included in the broad notion of Southeastern Europe for historical reasons, as they had been part of the Ottoman Empire, but mostly because of German geopolitical interests and projects. As for the region's internal geography, what is usually pointed out—aside from its mountainous or semi-mountainous character—is its division into small "compartments" (presumably fostering division and isolation).[5] In general, *Südostforschung* was dominated by (human) geography, geopolitics, and *Volkskunde* or ethnography (with the latter searching for a pattern of cultural traits—"cultural morphology").

Although this scholarship claimed "objectivity" in the spirit of positivism, a great deal of it was strongly politicized by German or Austrian interests seeking influence in the Balkans, while some of it was directly connected with Nazi ideology and projects, such as the hegemonic project *Wirtschaftsraum Grossdeutschland Südost*, i.e., a large German economic space extending to the southeast. The very idea of a German *Südost* (Southeast) implied that parts of Southeastern Europe were, in fact, German cultural space (*Kulturboden*), due to the superiority of German culture, or even German soil (*Volksboden*), based on German settlements.[6]

The *Südostforschung* achieved great theoretical and methodological sophistication with Fritz Valjavec, who was closely associated with Nazism. He argued that Southeastern Europe and the Balkans were different concepts with different geographical ranges, especially to the north: the Balkans extend to the Danube and the Sava, while Southeastern Europe comprises the Balkans but extends further to include Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Romania; there are also close links to Asia Minor and to the southern Russian territories. For Valjavec only the Balkans present an unity in a historical and

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Südosteuropa-Forschung," in Georg Stadtmüller, *Geschichte Südosteuropas* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1976), 401–415.

5 On the geographical aspect, see Karl Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte und Geschichtswissenschaft. Eine Einführung* (Vienna and Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1990), 103–114.

6 About the *Ost-Forschung*, see Dietmar Müller, "Southeastern Europe as a Historical Meso-Region: Constructing Space in Twentieth-Century German Historiography," *European Review of History / Revue européenne d'histoire* 10, no. 2 (2003): 393–408, esp. 393–400 and the literature cited there. See also Eduard Mühle, "Hermann Aubin, der deutschen Osten und die deutsche Ostforschung," in Eduard Mühle, *Für Volk und deutschen Osten. Der Historiker Hermann Aubin und die deutsche Ostforschung* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 2005), 621–636.

cultural ("cultural-morphological") sense (but not as geographical space), while Southeastern Europe is just a (geo/politically conditioned) geographical concept.[7] The Balkans are thus a more or less interconnected and integrated "object" of study (*Gegenstand*), while Southeastern Europe is primarily a "working concept" (*Arbeitsbegriff*), in the sense that its unity (in reality) is not a precondition for the research but a way of looking at it and of proceeding (referring to methodology).[8]

From linguistics in particular, there comes the generally accepted notion of a "Balkan language union (or league)" (*Sprachbund*), elaborated (after a prehistory of finding common elements in Balkan languages) by Kristian Sandfeld-Jensen in the 1930s and authoritatively represented by Victor Friedman in the present.[9] Some have attempted to extend it beyond language to a Balkan (actually Orthodox) "cultural union" based on common Hellenic education and literature and its publics, and the resulting loyalties and identities, such as Raymond Detrez's "Romaic community" (in our first volume) and Paschalis Kitromilides's "Orthodox Commonwealth" (with a strong emphasis on the unifying force of Orthodox faith and the Patriarchate).[10]

Yet in spite of the intuitive awareness of Balkan commonality, the search for common or shared traits proved very difficult because of a multiplicity of internal ethnic, religious, language, and other cultural differences and variations. This is evident already with Cvijić, whose attention to variety in its different forms subverts the supposed Balkan cultural unity. The confusion becomes still greater when "maps" on various criteria (worked out by different

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7 Fritz Valjavec, "Südosteuropa und Balkan," *Südost-Forschungen* 7, no. 12 (1942): 1–8; "Der Werdegang," esp. 15–16, 18, 32–33.

8 Valjavec, "Südosteuropa und Balkan," 5–6, similarly 8.

9 Kristian Sandfeld-Jensen, *Linguistique balkanique. Problèmes et résultats* (Paris: Champion, 1930). The general notion of a linguistic union (*Sprachbund*) is attributed to the Russian linguist N.S. Trubetzkoy, who stressed language interaction and contact-induced change in his *Psychologie du langage*. The important idea here is that the language similarities are between unrelated languages and have resulted from living in contact. See also Victor A. Friedman, *Studies on Albanian and other Balkan Languages* (Peja: Dukagjini, 2004); "The Balkan Languages and Balkan Linguistics," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40 (October 2011): 275–291; Victor Friedman, "The Place of Balkan Linguistics in Understanding Balkan History and Balkan Modernity," *Bulletin de l'Association des études sud-est européen* 24–25 (1994–1995): 87–93.

10 Raymond Detrez, "Pre-National Identities in the Balkans," in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. 1, *National Ideologies and Language Policies*, eds. Roumen Daskalov and Tchavdar Marinov (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 13–65; Paschalis Kitromilides, *An Orthodox Commonwealth: Symbolic Legacies and Cultural Encounters in Southeastern Europe* (Aldershot, Hampshire, UK: Ashgate Variorum, 2007).

disciplines) are juxtaposed to ascertain that they do not coincide but overlap, and boundaries are fluid and "transitional." Yet some cultural features have been attributed special significance and elevated to the position of decisive markers. This was especially the case with the aforementioned patriarchal way of life and its virtues,[11] recalling the "honor and shame complex" in the Mediterranean (or of "caste" in Southeast Asia). Cultural commonality or unity was also conceived in terms of a set or pattern of cultural traits or what (hardly more convincingly) was called "cultural morphology."

A recent example is Karl Kaser's treatment of "patriarchy" as an important defining feature of what he calls "Eurasia Minor" (the Balkans plus Asia Minor and the broader Middle East).[12] In a newly revised edition of one of his books, Kaser sees the discontinuity of elites as the basic problem of the modern Balkans and derives from it a number of other characteristics, such as a shallow bourgeois or civil society; clientelistic networks among the elites; colonization of all important institutions by those networks; a close relationship between political and economic elites, in which the former protect the illegal transactions of the latter in return for economic reward; and finally, distrust of the state by the ordinary citizens. Kaser differentiates between three cultural or civilizational zones in Europe: Eastern, Western, and Southern (Mediterranean). The Balkan Southeast is close to the Mediterranean, which is typified by personalized (rather than institutionalized) social relations and conflict-solving in the form of traditional clientelistic networks, which in the Balkan case are said to be based upon kinship relations—this goes along with distrust of institutions and their colonization by clientelistic groups of followers. By contrast, the Western zone is characterized by "institutionalization of the social relations" and the mediation of conflict by law and institutions.[13]

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11 After Cvijić, the patriarchal, heroic way of life was described by Gerhard Gesemann, *Heroische Lebensform. Zur Literatur und Wesenskunde der balkanischen Patriarchalität* (Berlin: Wiking Verlag, 1943).

12 Karl Kaser, *Patriarchy after Patriarchy: Gender Relations in Turkey and in the Balkans 1500–2000* (Vienna: LIT Verlag, 2008), especially the introduction and the conclusion. Kaser himself admits that "patriarchy" (a complex of ideas, values, and practices) is not specific to Eurasia Minor but characteristic of the whole of Europe and Eurasia over centuries (since the Bronze Age, according to Jack Goody) and that it does not apply to the entire Balkans. There are the additional concepts of "state patriarchy" (under state socialism) and "private patriarchy" (in the family) and the idea of a "patriarchal backlash" after 1989 and with the Islamic trend in Turkey, so that, taken as a whole, the work reaches the conclusion: "after patriarchy—patriarchy again."

13 Karl Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte und Geschichtswissenschaft*, 2nd ed. (Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2002), 111–118.

Another recent reductionist example comes from the political scientist George Schöpflin. His list of shared Balkan experiences and patterns includes a particular type of imperial rule with alien forms of social knowledge and power and alien forms of exclusion and legitimation, highly oppressive and arbitrary administration, certain myth structures, religious thought-worlds and thought-styles that privilege collective over individual responsibility, a strong sense of hierarchy, weak urbanization, no radical secularization, modernity introduced from above by the state and not matched by society, and the legacy of non-modern networks of power based on patron-client networks and the persistence of informal regulation.[14]

To take another example, in the depiction of the Balkans, the ethnologist Klaus Roth differentiates between "constructs" (in perception) and "objective" (observable) realities; outside and inside perspectives; and finally, between elites and common people (and everyday life), where cultural traits are supposed to reside and endure. Then he comes up with a list of features of "Balkan culture" subdivided into the categories of material culture, social relations and structures, behavior, and norms and values. These features include a concentration on familism and kinship, a personalization of relations, clientelism and patronage in politics, orientation toward groups instead of individualism, hospitality, patriarchalism in economic affairs, parochialism even in major cities in the form of associations of people born in the same place, urban/rural antagonism, suspicion of the state and of the rulers and law, underdeveloped civil society, and a preference for direct informal oral communication to written and formal communication.[15] In another work, Roth is even more explicit about the significance of patriarchal (peasant) social forms well into the modernization process in the Balkans and even up to the present day. The reception of the forms of modern Western civilization is, he says, highly selective. It has led to mixing ("syncretism") with the traditional forms and to adaptations in which technology and items of material culture are readily taken over while foreign forms of behavior and communication, attitudes, and values are rejected and the traditional ones retained. These include the significance of family and kin relations, clientelism, traditional care of the children,

14 George Schöpflin, "Defining South-Eastern Europe," *Balkanologie* 3, no. 2 (1999): 67–72.

15 Klaus Roth, "Ethnokulturelle Gemeinschaft der Balkanvölker: Konstrukt oder Realität?" in *Der Balkan. Friedenszone oder Pulverfass?* eds. Valeria Heuberger, Arnold Suppan, and Elisabeth Vyslonzil (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998), 63–78.

personalized relations and dependencies, and strong social control—a kind of (superficial) "symbolic modernization" and a "cultural lag."[16]

Descriptions in terms of culture (traits, attitudes, values, mentalities, etc.) such as the above risk overgeneralizing, essentializing, and eternalizing cultural characteristics. In any case, they come across as quite static or even standing apart from time. Indeed, attempts to construct a repertoire of common Balkan social and cultural features or mental traits may end up creating a caricature, especially if era and social milieu are disregarded. And the more one moves from material things and routines of everyday life to social forms and, beyond that, to mentalities and psychological traits, the more controversial the particular descriptions or checklists become.

As Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis pointed out in a recent special issue of *Balkanologie* dedicated to theoretical questions of Balkan studies, the problem with definitions of the region in terms of common (cultural or psychological) traits is "in agreeing on which particular traits are decisive in marking community and demonstrating regional unity; and on how far they override political, religious or linguistic difference."[17] In the same issue, Pamela Ballinger makes a point about Southern Europe that is likewise valid for the Balkans. She notes that descriptions in terms of "cultural traits" and the notion of a culture area in general (composed as an inventory of cultural traits) have become largely unconvincing. This is the case partly because of the geopolitical interests promoting such studies and the colonial overtones and arrogance of the outside observer, but also because of the tautological reasoning: cultural unity is explained in terms of traits themselves validated in the area's cultural unity. In fact, the European, mostly German, notion of culture as composed of cultural traits and the tradition of area studies informed by it was exported to the United States by Alfred Kroeber and elaborated by him and his disciples in cultural anthropology; later it returned to Europe (e.g., in studying Southern Europe as an area defined by the famous "honor and shame complex").[18]

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16 Klaus Roth, "Wie 'europäisch' is Südosteuropa? Zum Problem des kulturellen Wandels auf der Balkanhalbinsel," in *Wandel der Volkskultur in Europa. Festschrift fur Günter Wiegelmann zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds. Nils-Arvid Bringéus et al. (Münster, 1988), vol. 1, 219–231, esp. 223–229.

17 Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis, "South-Eastern Europe: History, Concepts, Boundaries," *Balkanologie* 3, no. 2 (1999): 47–66, cited on 54.

18 Pamela Ballinger, "Definitional Dilemmas: Southeastern Europe as 'Culture Area,'" *Balkanologie* 3, no. 2 (1999): 73–91, esp. 81, 90–91.

Another problem is that presumably "objective" or "neutral" descriptions from the outside have become increasingly intolerable to native scholars sensitive to issues of identity and to anything that smacks of colonial attitudes. One may be soul-searching and self-critical in studying the region from within but less inclined to receive negative feedback from outside. This is all the more so as such accounts may be less informed and stereotyped and (as often happens) just passed on from one generation of foreign scholars to the next without regard to change (and disregarding one's own society's "backyard"). A recent development, parallel to what is happening in anthropology (and postcolonial studies), is that native scholars from the Balkans would like to talk authoritatively about the region themselves, so that (as Clifford Geertz once put it) what matters is not only what is being said but also who is saying it.[19] With this in mind, Roth's hope of co-opting indigenous scholars into agreeing on his description (above) is ill-founded.[20]

As Bracewell and Drace-Francis suggest, a way out of such an impasse is "to conceive of 'Balkan culture' less in terms of objective criteria, and more as an argument over meanings and definitions, advanced by particular people, in particular places, for particular purposes" and "asking not whether cultural identifications such as that of Cvijić were accurate, but what symbols they promoted, what images they projected, what interests they were meant to advance."[21] Marko Živković provides a good example of this approach in his treatment of the rhetorical re-signification of Cvijić's mentality types (which in the original were often ambiguous) in journalistic and scholarly discourses during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s.[22] As Živković shows, it was not just that Cvijić's characterizations of Dinaric highlanders were simplistically treated as "virtues" and those of lowlanders as "vices." It was also that they were resignified (reversed) to turn positive into negative and vice versa and were assigned ethnic meanings (brigandish, militarist Serbs versus peace-loving, sober Croats). Moreover, both were applied internally to differentiate good from bad Serbs (and good from bad Croats) in critical writings from within the Serb and the Croat communities.

A further problem arises from the fact that Balkan studies (like most area studies) is conceived as an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary field (as

19 This problem is perceived by Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis, "South-Eastern Europe," 47–66, esp. 59.

20 Roth, "Ethnokulturelle Gemeinschaft," 73.

21 Bracewell and Drace-Francis, "South-Eastern Europe," 56.

22 Marko Živković, "Violent Highlanders and Peaceful Lowlanders: Uses and Abuses of Ethno-Geography in the Balkans from Versailles to Dayton," *Replika*, special issue, 1997.

noted by Valjavec and many others later on[23]). This has many advantages, yet there are drawbacks in that the various disciplines come with their own approaches, concepts, and interests. The discrepancy is particularly great between history, with its finer sense of time, and the rather timeless abstractions and classifications of political science, sociology, and the older ethnography. Karl Kaser recently proposed an integrative type of Balkan scholarship in the name of "historical anthropology." The idea was not to try to integrate disciplines and their approaches, which may not be workable, but to converge on the object of study—people—in their various aspects: economic, social, political, and cultural. Whatever one may think of this transdisciplinary bid (and similar recurrent calls for a "synthetic" or "integrative" "science of man"), the differences between the disciplinary approaches and traditions can hardly be overcome and affect the very way the object is perceived and constituted (Kaser himself leans more toward ethnology than history).[24]

The risky terrain of Balkan mentalities has attracted interest in recent times. The scholars taking a new look at it are trying to avoid some of the old pitfalls and fallacies while updating the concept of mentality itself. One example is Paschalis Kitromilides's attempt to construct a common "Balkan mentality." He starts with a critique of Cvijić's undertaking to describe a shared "Balkan mentality" (in 1918), which, according to him, is undermined by linking it (among other factors) with ethnic identities that are incompatible with one another. Kitromilides is well aware of the controversial status of the concept of "mentality" and the various critiques against it, such as tautology, unverifiable speculation, and simplifying generalizations. He argues that it only makes sense if it is "context-bound," especially within a certain political context and framework of communication. In search of such a shared mentality, he travels back in time to the pre-national period—more specifically, the eighteenth century, when the Balkans were free of national divisions and individual national mentalities. Religion was then the primary force in shaping the "vision of the world" and the frameworks of daily life and thus of mentalities cautiously understood as "certain recurrent attitudes, beliefs or perceptions of shared interests that characterize a culture." The other preconditions for the existence of a common "Balkan mentality," according to Kitromilides, were the overarching political institutions (Ottoman administration, tax system, etc.), the movement of people, and regional networks of economic activities; he also adds the "idea of

23 Valjavec, "Der Werdegang," 28; Mathias Bernath, "Südosteuropäische Geschichte als gesonderte Disziplin," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 20 (1973): 136–144, esp. 135–136.

24 Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte* (2002 edition), 202–205.

Europe" as a new factor. Kitromilides then proceeds to delineate the "mentality" shaped by Balkan Orthodoxy, the religion of the vast majority of the population, based on the life experiences of several Orthodox authors who wrote autobiographies. This mentality is characterized by a variety of parameters that go beyond the knowledge of the religious doctrine and learning to social life itself. Such parameters include shared symbolism and "maps of meaning," a sense of time around a common calendar and organization of the life of the individual around the church, a sense of space and geography oriented toward sacred sites (Mount Athos, shrines, graves of saints, places of martyrdom, places of miracles), and the understanding of Ottoman rule as a legitimate order (supported by the Orthodox Patriarchate).[25] However, enticing as it may seem, Kitromilides's attempt is not without its flaws. It is based on evidence from intellectuals only (and disregards other social groups—the author rejects ethnographic descriptions of folk culture). Moreover, for some reason it presumes in some passages—perhaps in a "slip of the tongue"—the recovery of a common "Balkan mentality" instead of an Orthodox Balkan one (even though the author is well aware of his "object"). What one can perhaps say is that, as the Orthodox population was a majority, this mentality was widely shared.

The study of mentalities was updated by the Russian scholar Tatyana Tsiv'yan with a semiotic attempt to reconstruct a common Balkan "model (or picture) of the world" (*model' mira*), that is, endowed with a specific "Balkan quality" (*balkanskost'*) and characteristic of a *homo balcanicus* (*balkanets*—Balkan man).[26] This model of the world, defined as a universal sign system (grounded in language) through which people appropriate and cope with the surrounding milieu, consists of general and universal ("cosmological") binary oppositions related to structures of space (such as: up/down, earth/sky, earth/the underworld) and time (day/night, summer/winter), as well as to social categories (young/old, man/woman, self/Other) and the fundamental opposition nature/culture (raw/cooked). The Balkan model of the world is presumably grounded in the aforementioned Balkan linguistic union, and its reconstruction actually draws upon the analysis of folklore. Tsiv'yan herself recognizes

25 Paschalis Kitromilides, "'Balkan Mentality': History, Legend, Imagination," in Kitromilides, *An Orthodox Commonwealth*, 163–191, reprinted from *Nations and Nationalism* 2, no. 2 (1996), cited on 169.

26 Tatyana Tsiv'yan, *Lingvisticheskie osnovy balkanskoy modeli mira* (Moscow: Nauka, 1990), esp. 3–7, 64–108; Tatyana Tsiv'yan, *Dvizheniye i put' v balkanskoy modeli mira* (Moscow: Indrik, 1999). The idea of a *homo balcanicus* also appears in the article by the Bulgarian literary critic Svetlozar Igov, "Homo Balcanicus: krăstopătniyat chovek," *Literaturno-esteticheski protsesi na Balkanite* (Sofia, 1994), 46–57.

the rigidity of operating with binary oppositions and seeks to remedy it by introducing ambiguities, mixing, revaluations, substitutions, overturning, and so on between the terms (and even holds these to be characteristic of the Balkan "model of the world"). Yet she does not see a problem in constructing a unitary "model of the world" for the Balkans from the Neolithic era to at least the end of the Ottoman era (from which the folklore stems). She is also not deterred by the fact that these oppositions are present in most, if not all, cultures. She deals with it by pointing to some allegedly Balkan specifics (yet without comparison with other cultural units), such as centrality of the opposition Self/Other (We/They); dominance of the Road—land or maritime—and of Movement in the Balkan appropriation of space; a "meandering" representation of space; a certain tragic intensification of the opposition Life/Death through the motif (in folklore) of human sacrifice; and the abovementioned ways of subverting the rigidity of the binary terms.

The present authors refrained from describing the Balkans or parts of it in cultural (or psychological) terms. We came across the problem of mutual perceptions of ethnic or national mentalities and psychological traits on the part of historical actors (in journalistic and scholarly writings), such as in relations between Bulgarian and Greek national activists or between Romanian and Greek rival elites. Rather than approaching such characteristics in terms of truth or falseness (an impossible enterprise and a dead end), we inquired into their social conditioning and their function for the (cultural) self-identification through distancing from the Other. The reciprocity and complementarity in such mutual perceptions, representations, and descriptions were highlighted. Furthermore, it was argued that, once they were set in stereotypes and made immune to change over time, they functioned as rhetorical devices in various sociopolitical situations and lost their grounding in the initial situation that engendered them (and thus the plausibility they might have had).

The Balkans as a Historical Region: *Longue-Durée* Structures

The older type of scholarship in the German-speaking world continued in a modified form for some time after 1945, cleansed of expansionist concepts and not German-centered yet only partly depoliticized. It was only in the 1970s that the older tradition was overcome and a new type of Balkan scholarship emerged there. A new overall definition proposed by Mathias Bernath enjoyed a wide consensus. It held that Southeastern Europe constituted a "historical region" (in his term: "unit of events"—*Geschehenseinheit*) precisely owing to its "in-between" geographical and geopolitical position "between Rome and

Byzantium, the Habsburgs and the Ottomans, between the hegemonic claims of the modern Great Powers in East and West."[27] Bernath emphasized the plurality of the region in terms of landscape, language and ethnic makeup, and cultural and social forms and spoke of "unity in diversity" (*Einheit in der Vielfalt*). He also insisted that it was necessary to study the region as a whole and its exposure to supranational hegemonic influences and powers while also studying the history of individual peoples and nations. As Dietmar Müller has remarked, the formula of "unity in diversity" solved the problem of defining such a varied region with fluid boundaries and often contradictory traits by making it part of the very definition: "The puzzling variety of ethnic groups with different religions and cultures, with no clear boundaries between them, i.e. the presumed boundaries according to one criterion and generated by one type of disciplinary knowledge not being corroborated by another, would be due to Southeastern Europe's in-between position, which discouraged processes of unification and homogenization and led instead to processes of hegemonic stratification with coexisting super- and substrata."[28]

The new developments in defining the Balkans took place under the banner of structural (and economic) history and drew on modernization theory in particular, unlike the previous geographical and cultural approaches. The Balkans came to be defined in terms of *longue-durée* periods with specific "structural" (i.e., durable) features or characteristics. In addition to shedding the political projects and ideological contaminations of the interwar era and overcoming the German-centered perspective, the advance over the older scholarship consisted of viewing the region expressly as a "historical region," that is, not immutable in its outlook but undergoing changes.

The concept of "region" is, of course, very old, but in historiography it can be traced back to the interwar period. It was first elaborated in a debate on Eastern Europe between Polish, Czech, and German historians, which was triggered by the Polish historian Oskar Halecki at the Fifth International Congress of Historians in Brussels in 1923 and culminated at the Seventh International

27 Bernath, "Südosteuropäische Geschichte," cited on 142, "unity in diversity" on 143. Bernath provided also one of the first (albeit short) descriptions of the regions in structural terms (143–144).

28 Müller, "Southeastern Europe," 394. The "unity in diversity" formula has been questioned in more recent times, for instance, by Holm Sundhaussen, because if diversity is emphasized, it is not clear where the unity is. See Holm Sundhaussen, "Was ist Südosteuropa und warum beschäftigen wir uns (nicht) damit?" *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen* 42, nos. 5–6 (2002): 92–105, esp. 101.

Congress of Historians in Warsaw in 1934.[29] The regionalization was taken up and politically appreciated in the Cold War context. In works written in the United States after 1945, Halecki differentiated between two historical meso-regions: "old" Western Europe and "new" Eastern Europe. He also differentiated between two intermediary ones: "West Central Europe" (meaning divided Germany) and "East Central Europe" (meaning the "people's democracies" under Soviet hegemony); the latter was considered a "kidnapped" part of "the West" and an *antemurale* against Russia. In the 1980s the writers Milan Kundera and Czesław Miłosz and the historians György Konrád and Jenő Szücs[30] attempted to draw a border, culturally and historically, between their "East Central Europe"—*Mitteleuropa* (Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary)—and the rest of Eastern Europe, a concept that, after 1989, was politically instrumentalized to secure membership in the European Union.[31] This was also the first and still moderate challenge to the wider notion of Southeastern Europe—a notion that included Slovenia, Croatia, Vojvodina, and Transylvania.[32]

Halecki's programmatic writings laid the groundwork for the present-day concept of "historical region" (*Geschichtsregion*), initially called "historical space" (*Geschichtsraum*) or "cultural space" (*Kulturraum*), which was elaborated in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland from the 1960s onwards. It is bolstered by the present drive to "regionalize" Europe in an effort to overcome the national framework and as a response to the process of European integration (the "project Europe"). Among the particular sub-regions (meso-regions) of Europe, Southeastern Europe and East Central Europe are the most elaborated, while Northeastern Europe (the Baltics) is less so, and Russia, with its Eurasian dimension, is more of a universe in itself (and constitutes what is left over from "Eastern Europe" after the three other sub-regions are subtracted). Austrian historian Arno Strohmeyer has recently defined a "historical region" as "a historical-structural spatial category used to designate a region of relative

29 About the debate, see Piotr Wandycz, "East European History and Its Meaning: The Halecki-Bidlo-Handelsman Debate," *War and Society*, eds. Jónás Pál, Peter Pastor, et al. (Budapest: n.p., 1992), 308–319.

30 Jenő Szücs, "The Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline," *Acta Historica: Revue de l'Academie des Sciences de Hongrie* 29 (1983): 131–184, reprinted in *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives*, ed. John Keane (London and New York: Verso, 1988), 291–332.

31 See Stefan Troebst, "Introduction: What's in a Historical Region? A Teutonic Perspective," *European Review of History / Revue européenne d'histoire* 10, no. 2 (2003): 172–188. For a highly critical view of the "Myth of Central Europe," see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 140–160.

32 Müller, "Southeastern Europe," 400.

historical uniformity, which can be delimited through historical features as a part of Europe with specific particularity."[33] To the aforementioned European sub-regions he adds "Western Europe" and "Northwestern Europe." Strohmeyer stresses that a historical region is not defined by geographical borders but presents an abstract and oscillating "space" with *longue-durée* features, which distinguishes it from other historical regions. In practice, the *differentia specifica* of a region is presented by a cluster of half a dozen to a dozen "structural markers."[34]

The same author provides an example of how the comparative approach can be applied in the construction of "historical regions" in the case of Central Eastern Europe.[35] The idea is to start with a certain characteristic feature (*Merkmal*) of a smaller historical region (*Kleinregion*)—in this case, the sociopolitical structure of estates (*Ständewesen*) and the political views and legitimation associated with them in Austria in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—and then proceed with an intra-regional comparison in order to establish whether this is indeed a characteristic feature of the whole region. The final step is to an inter-regional comparison of the same feature, to see if it is "specific" for the region and thus marks it as a distinct, and hence authentic, region. The inter-regional comparison in this case involves juxtaposing Austria with the Russian and the Ottoman empires. It shows a clear difference with the Ottoman Empire and a not-so-marked difference with the Russian Empire, where estates existed. Additionally, there is a reference to Europe as a whole (in fact: Western Europe), with the conclusion that, through the political theory of

33 Arno Strohmeyer, "Historische Komparatistik und die Konstruktion von Geschichtsregionen: der Vergleich als Methode der historischen Europaforschung," *Jahrbücher fur Geschichte und Kultur Südosteuropas* 1 (1999): 39–55, cited on 47.

34 On the subregions of Eastern Europe (Central Eastern Europe, Southeastern Europe, Northeastern Europe, and Russia), see Klaus Zernak, *Osteuropa. Eine Einführing in seine Geschichte* (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1977); Szücs, "The Three Historical Regions." A short structural description or *Strukturgeschichte* of Central Eastern Europe (with a critique of negative judgments as the result of comparison with a "normal" development in the West) appears in Philipp Ther, "Comparisons, Cultural Transfers, and the Study of Networks: Toward a Transnational History of Europe," in *Comparative and Transnational History: Central European Approaches and New Perspectives*, eds. Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), 204–225, esp. 211. For longer versions, see W. Eberhard et al., eds., *Westmitteleuropa—Ostmitteleuropa. Vergleiche und Beziehungen* (Munich, 1992); Klaus Zernack, *Polen und Russland: Zwei Wege in der europäischen Geschichte* (Berlin, 1994).

35 Arno Strohmeyer, "Historische Komparatistik."

(legitimate) resistance of the estates, Central Eastern Europe participated in "overall" European spiritual trends of political theory.

Yet (at least for me) there arise questions, such as: is just one feature enough to define a region? In case of other features: what if there is no geographical overlap between them? If Europe is to be an overarching reference, why only Western Europe? More generally: if every region of Europe is "specific" (in some ways), can Europe as a whole be constructed as an overarching region? What, then, will be the common denominator? Finally, there is a certain irony in crediting freedoms for the estates with a role in developing freedom more generally (not to mention that the serfdom of the peasant majority in Central Eastern Europe went hand-in-hand with these freedoms[36]) while equating the absence of estates in the Ottoman Empire with an absence of (collective) freedoms yet omitting the absence of serfs and some collective rights of the religious communities (*millets*). The more general point I am making is that regional "features" allow various agendas to be pursued under the guise of scholarly objectivity.

The region-building in historical science has also been encouraged by the more general "spatial turn" in the social sciences.[37] The new spatiality rejects connection with interwar geo-determinism and geopolitics (that of Karl Haushofer and other thinkers of geopolitics) and rehabilitates the importance of space in history as well. However, especially with more radical geographers such as Hans-Dietrich Schultz, space is not a geographical reality but a construction (as indicated by the title: "Spaces Are Not, Spaces Are Being Made"), and so is the presentation of space in maps, according to radical deconstructionist cartographers.[38] As Benjamin Schenk pointed out, the new interest in

36 The development towards freedom—but of the European West—is a central theme of the narrative of Jenö Szücs, "The Three Historical Regions."

37 About the "spatial turn," see Jürgen Osterhammel, "Die Wiederkehr des Raumes: Geopolitik, Geohistorie und historische Geographie," *Neue Politische Literatur* 43 (1998): 374–397. This is an extensive overview of the literature on borders, geopolitics, and geohistory past and present. Among the advocates of the "spatial turn" is Karl Schlögel: see Karl Schlögel, *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit. Über Zivilisationsgeschichte und Geopolitik* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2003); Karl Schlögel, "Die Wiederkehr des Raumes. Die Konkretwerdung der Welt nach dem Verschwinden der Systeme," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, no. 139 (September 16, 1999), supplement "Bilder und Zeiten," i–ii.

38 Hans-Dietrich Schultz, "Räume sind nicht, Räume werden gemacht. Zur Genese 'Mitteleuropas' in der deutschen Geographie," *Europa Regional* 5, no. 1 (1997): 2–14. Schultz investigates the concept of "Central Europe" (*Mitteleuropa*) as "German space" in the older German geography and *Länderkunde* with the concomitant idea of "natural borders" and reveals their deeply political nature in the political rivalry with France and in German

social and historical space, unlike the older one, is not essentialist but regards space as a product of human activity and perception. In other words, it recognizes the socially constructed nature of spaces and their perception, their symbolic coding, and so on. Schenk recognizes a certain tension between the treatment of historical regions as "invented," "constructions," and a product of perception and communication versus the understanding of a historical region as *Strukturraum* (structural or structured space). However, he hopes the two positions can be reconciled.[39]

Why construct historical meso-regions? The scholarly purpose is said to be to create a framework for transnational comparative analysis and highlight interregional differences and regional specifics according to the logic that there is no identity without alterity. Historians are careful to distance themselves from essentialist and deterministic ways of viewing regions and to affirm that these are "an artistic device and heuristic concept for comparative analysis in order to identify transnational structures common to a constructed meta-region which is in general not congruent with geographical or contemporary political boundaries."[40] What is thus emphasized is the constructed nature and heuristic purposes of such meso-regions, as well as their flexibility both in terms of space and time. In view of the renewed interest in regions, Stefan Troebst wonders whether we are witnessing a "regional turn" alongside the new interest in "space and place."[41] Or as Jörg Hackmann and Robert Schweitzer put it, while historians previously acted as "nation-builders," they may now be assuming the role of "region-builders."[42] (Zernack's neologism "Northeastern Europe" is a case in point.) One may wonder whether this is motivated by a desire to leave the "ghetto" of Central Eastern and Southeastern Europe—if everything

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imperialism. For cartography, see J.B. Harley, "Deconstructing the Map," *Cartographica* 26, no. 2 (1989): 1–20; J.B. Harley, "Maps, Knowledge, and Power," in *The Iconography of Landscape*, eds. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 277–312.

39 See Benjamin Schenk, "Der spatial turn und die Osteuropäische Geschichte," in *H-Soz-u-Kult* (June 1, 2006), http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/forum/2006-06-001.

40 Troebst, "Introduction," 177. We saw the antecedent of this flexible constructivist notion in Fritz Valjavec's "working concept" (*Arbeitsbegriff*).

41 Stefan Troebst, "Vom spatial zum regional Turn? Geschichtsregionale Konzeptionen in den Kulturwissenschaften," *Dimensionen der Kultur- und Gesellschaftsgeschichte. Festschrift für Hannes Siegrist zum 60. Geburtstag* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2007), 143–159.

42 Jörg Hackmann and Robert Schweitzer, "Introduction: North Eastern Europe as a Historical Region," *Journal of Baltic Studies* 33 (2002): 361–368, esp. 361.

is a region, then there are no privileged regions—or by a desire to retain some specifics in a globalizing world.

Yet the concept of a historical region is not without problems, not primarily for scholarly reasons but because of the functioning of meso-regions in politics, media, and public discourses. As Troebst has noted, for historians, historical regions may represent something "virtual" that fluctuates in space and time and is subject to revisions, but in the public realm, regions stand for something "real" and a frame of reference for current events and processes. Moreover, the two realms and uses of the terms cannot be hermetically separated, and historians often assume that what has been "constructed" for scholarly purposes actually "is."[43] Politics was involved in the background of the aforementioned interwar debate on Eastern Europe (the Jagiellonian idea versus Slav solidarity), as Piotr Wandycz has convincingly shown.[44] The "politics of spacing" concerning Eastern Europe in particular is critically analyzed by Maria Todorova using some recent examples, such as the concept of East Central Europe by the aforementioned Hungarian and Czech intellectuals in the 1980s, which was value-laden and political through and through. Initially it was emancipatory (in opposition to the Soviet hegemony), but it turned overtly political and exclusive of the other Eastern European regions in the race for membership in the European Union after 1989. Basically, the issue was about the "quality" of Europeanness and European belonging, from which the Balkans (and Russia) were excluded.[45] Other authors, not least Eric Hobsbawm, also reacted against Central Eastern Europe's self-congratulatory region-building and the consequent degrading of the rest of Eastern Europe.[46]

The problem of regions is further aggravated because geographical terms are often value-laden as a result and a symptom of their geo/political and ideological uses. Examples include "Balkans" in Western discourses, *Südost* ("Southeast"), *Mitteleuropa* (Central Europe), and the very term for space (*Raum*) in the Third Reich.[47] It would be easy if we could separate political

43 Troebst, "Introduction," 178.

44 Piotr Wandycz, "East European History," 316–319.

45 Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 140–160; Maria Todorova, "Spacing Europe: What is a Historical Region?" *East Central Europe* 32, nos. 1–2 (2005): 59–78.

46 Hans-Dietrich Schultz, "Räume sind nicht," esp. 12–13. In his words, spaces like East-Central Europe are mental spaces, spaces of the imagination and of wishes, even though they project themselves upon physical-material space and refer to material objects (here also is the reference to Eric Hobsbawm).

47 Stefan Troebst, "Introduction," 178–181, 185–187. Also Maria Todorova, "Spacing Europe," 63–64. Using the terminology of Jakobsonian linguistics, Todorova describes Eastern Europe in general (and East Central Europe and Southeastern Europe) as "marked

and ideological concepts from legitimate (neutral) scholarly designations, as Alexei Miller proposes in the case of East Central Europe, but it is not clear how (in fact, his very exposition of the various political usages points up the difficulties).[48] Nor can one wait for realities to change in a manner that will "depoliticize" the concepts.

Finally, comparison itself, so often praised as a heuristic means and a way to avoid the essentialization ("ontologizing") of traits in studying Eastern European regions, is not without problems, as some post-colonial scholars have pointed out with regard to other areas. This is because it tends to emphasize differences and thus freeze (eternalize) alterity and also because, as a rule, the points of comparison come from the West taken as a normative model, so that comparisons lead to ascertaining lacks and deficiencies in the peripheral region: not what is, but what is not. In the best case the peripheral region appears as something peculiar and a deviation from "normal" development.[49] This is especially evident when discussing the economic development of peripheral regions in terms of modernization theories (see below).

Concerning the Balkans in particular, a sophisticated structural analysis is presented by Holm Sundhaussen. A central methodological point he makes is that a region is defined not by single features (*Merkmale*) but by clusters of characteristics that make it unique. Moreover, these features vary over time:

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categories" of regions, in contrast to unmarked categories such as the background norm Europe (implicitly meaning Western Europe) (75–78).

48 Alexei Miller, "Central Europe: A Tool for Historians or a Political Concept?" *European Review of History* (1999): 85–89; Alexei Miller, "Russia, Eastern Europe, Central Europe and the Framework of European History," in *Annäherungen an eine europäische Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Gerald Stourzh (Vienna: Verlag des Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2002), 35–43, esp. 38. Miller himself proposes the concept of "borderland" and "transitional zone" as more appropriate tools for studying cultural history and the problem of identities on the eastern part of the Habsburg Empire.

49 Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria, "Einleitung: Geteilte Geschichten—Europa in einer postcolonialen Welt," in *Jenseits des Europazentrismus. Postcoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*, eds. Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria (Frankfurt and New York: Campus Verlag, 2002), 9–49, esp. 12–14; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), 29–32, 34–35. Yet the project of radical difference is difficult to practice. A more realistic possibility, namely to continue to present the history of Europe as a process of Westernization but to take the differences of Eastern Europe (and its contributions to the West) seriously, is discussed by Andreas Kappeler, "Die Bedeutung der Geschichte Osteuropas für ein gesamteuropäisches Geschichtsverstandnis," in *Annäherungen an eine europäische Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Gerald Stourzh, 43–55, esp. 49–55.

ideally there should be some overlap (*Deckungsgleichheit*) between the various reference systems over a longer period. Furthermore, there are no hard boundaries or eternal features of the Balkans; the reality is fluid, and alongside dominant features, there are all sorts of symbioses, mixed phenomena, "islands," and gradual transitions. Every classification is "reductionist" and a "simplification," and from a cognitive point of view, every perception (including academic ones) is an issue of selection and focusing. Yet in order to be valid, the construction of a historical space should be falsifiable: it serves merely to structure our cognitive interest, and it should be tested and modified if necessary. All this amounts to conceiving historical regions as heuristic devices, that is, working concepts to grasp realities and open to re-examination.[50]

In Sundhaussen's description (expressed here only in keywords), Southeastern Europe is characterized by eight features: the crowding and mixing of ethnic groups in a small area (which complicated the ethnogenesis with long-term consequences); the loss and late reception of the legacy of antiquity; the Byzantine-Orthodox legacy (state domination over the church that affected the development of law and knowledge, etc.); the Ottoman-Islamic legacy (which bolstered the forces of traditionalism and helped preserve archaic social forms and attitudes); social and economic "backwardness" in the modern era (and the resulting underdevelopment of a bourgeois civil society); state- and nation-building on an ethno-national basis and strong national rivalries with claims to "historical rights"; certain (admittedly controversial) mentalities and some especially virulent and politically manipulated myths about the past; the Balkans as an object of the Great Powers (which led Balkan politicians and intellectuals to perceive themselves as victims).[51]

In a subsequent work, Sundhaussen (in response to Todorova's critique, below) defended the indispensability of making differentiations in every definition and in defining regions in particular. He used the concept of "path dependency" to argue for his emphasis on continuity in Balkan development and its distinctiveness from other European regions from the Byzantine era through the Ottomans to the modern national era. He added another defining trait—religiously underpinned anti-Occidentalism—and emphasized the

50 Holm Sundhaussen, "Europa balcanica. Der Balkan als historischer Raum," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 25, no. 4 (1999): 626–653, esp. 628–632. An earlier version of this article is Holm Sundhaussen, "Osteuropa, Südosteuropa, Balkan: Überlegungen zur Konstruktion historischer Raumbegriffe," in *Was ist Osteuropa?* ed. Holm Sundhaussen (Berlin: Osteuropa-Institut der Freien Universität Berlin, 1988), 4–22. The structural traits appear here in a more poignant formulation.

51 Sundhaussen, "Europa balcanica," 638–652.

sociocultural and identitarian importance of religion (also for literature, painting, and architecture). Hence the differences between the Greek-Orthodox and the Latin-Roman traditions assumed a primary role.[52] There is also a further methodological clarification in that the elements of the cluster, which gives historical specificity to the Balkans, are dispersed in their spatial and temporal range and, together with other elements, build variously combined "zones of thickening" (*Verdichtungszones*). It is this combination of eight or nine features overlaid and "thickened" in a cluster that constitutes the Balkans.[53] What is noteworthy in this definition is that new features are added at different points in time, but no trait (in spite of the insistence on changeability over long periods) is ever eliminated. With some exaggeration, it could be said that for Sundhaussen, the Balkans are basically the Byzantine tradition.[54] We will compare this with Todorova's notion later on.

Such attempts to define the region in structural terms as a "historical region" are not unproblematic. To begin with, the "structural" significance of particular features may be contested. There is, furthermore, the danger of essentialism, that is, that certain traits are regarded as practically immutable over time. *Longue-durée* structural features are durable but not immutable or ahistorical. Finally, the specific features prove in many cases to be formulated in contrast with the West (rather than for their own sake). Moreover, they are regarded as "deviations" from a Western European model that is considered normative, and consequently, they are viewed as inferior. The general objection that Maria Todorova posed to Sundhaussen's structural description of the Balkans, thus sparking a controversy, was that it amounted to "ontologizing of differences" and "reductionist dichotomies," especially the Byzantine-Orthodox tradition versus the Roman Catholic.[55] She was not opposed in principle to the

52 Holm Sundhaussen, "Der Balkan: Ein Plädoyer für Differenz," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 29, no. 4 (2003): 608–624 (this anti-Western attitude appears *en passant* in "Europa balcanica," 644 and in "Osteuropa, Südosteuropa, Balkan," 18). Here Sundhaussen voices his discontent with the postmodern fashion of deconstructing notions of space and "realia" as "mental mapping," which he sees in the case of Eastern Europe as motivated by the desire for unification and doing away with all divisions (608, 624).

53 Sundhaussen, "Der Balkan," 620–621; "Was ist Südosteuropa?".

54 See Sundhaussen, "Was ist Südosteuropa?" 96–99; "Osteuropa, Südosteuropa, Balkan," 22; "Der Balkan," 614–615, 618–619. Sundhaussen argues the Byzantine tradition is mainly what defines the Balkans as a historical region (contrasting with Todorova's idea that the Balkans are primarily the Ottoman legacy) and that the Ottomans inherited it to a great extent and continued it through the Ottoman era and into the national era.

55 Maria Todorova, "Der Balkan als Analysekategorie: Grenzen, Raum, Zeit," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 3 (2002): 470–492, esp. 480–492. See also Dietmar Müller's rendering

construction of regions and the concomitant structural descriptions of their inner space (she practiced them herself in the last chapter of *Imagining the Balkans*). However, she became increasingly skeptical of borders, believing that they led to an obsession with difference and Otherness. She likewise felt structural analyses were rather "static" and ahistorical, and prone to essentialization. So she put forward another approach in terms of "legacies" (below).

Some unconventional "constructivist" attempts at redefining the Balkan region have been made. There is Stefan Troebst's attempt (following political scientists) to promote an enlarged Southeastern Europe as a "circum-Pontic" space that includes not only the Balkans but also the Caucasus. The historical arguments for this construction go back to the presence of Pontic Greeks from antiquity and within the common Byzantine and Ottoman frameworks, while the Russian penetration supposedly deepened the integration by mercantile means. The inspiration for this regional Black Sea concept is clearly the Braudelian idea of the unifying role of the Mediterranean for the "coastal societies." Whether this has been the case for the Pontic region and how deep the large ports culturally penetrated their hinterlands is another question.[56]

Kaser recently argued for a regional concept of "Eurasia Minor" that includes both the Balkans and the Near East ("between the Danube and Tigris rivers") on the historical ground that they were part not only of the Byzantine and the Ottoman Empires but also of ancient Greek civilization and even of a very early common or shared Near Eastern civilization that extended to the Balkans, created by sedentary people who cultivated cereals and domesticated animals, and which spread to the rest of Europe much later.[57] Again, the usefulness of this regional concept with regard to historical eras and distinctive features has been disputed.[58]

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of the controversy in a way sympathetic to Sundhaussen: Müller, "Southeastern Europe," 401–405.

56 Stefan Troebst, "Eine neue Südosteuropa-Konzeption? Der Balkan-Schwarzmeer-Kaukasus-Raum in politikwissenschaftlicher Sicht. Ein unvorgreiflicher Vorschlag zur Diskussion," *Jahrbücher fur Geschichte und Kultur Südosteuropas* 2 (2000): 153–159. Discussed in Müller, "Southeastern Europe," 406–407.

57 Karl Kaser, *The Balkans and the Near East: Introduction to a Shared History* (Berlin and Vienna: LIT Verlag, 2011), especially the introduction. Kaser justifies associating the Near East with the Balkans based on a "shared" or "joint" history. See also Karl Kaser, "Balkan Studies Today at the University of Graz (and Elsewhere)," www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/balkans/KKaser1.pdf (accessed December 20, 2013).

58 For example, Sundhaussen opposes the inclusion of Asia Minor, as it has long been in a process of de-Grecification and Turkification, starting with the battle of Mantzikert (or Manzikert) in 1071. See Sundhaussen, "Was ist Sudosteuropa," 99–100.

In general, sectoral "Balkan studies" interests has put too much pressure to secure its "object" as a region in order to legitimize the scholarship and the institutions dealing with it (and to justify the funding). It would be healthy to ease the insistence on rigidly defining boundaries, bounding spaces, describing essential features, or even structures, identifying overarching commonalities or formulating specificities vis-à-vis other parts of Europe in favor of heterogeneity within the region. A more "dynamic" and explicitly "constructed" concept of the Balkans as a region would be a better-suited tool for research. On the other hand, Karl Kaser's proposition (in the second revised edition of his book) to abstain altogether from using a (definable) regional concept of Southeastern Europe because of its constructed character and the inevitable opposition from scholars from the region is hardly realistic (and he does not adhere to it himself, despite trying to dissolve the concept of the Balkans into Southern Europe).[59]

The meaningfulness of the concept of region in general is also a question of "scale"—it is on a certain level of abstraction and for particular purposes and goals that geographic space is constituted as a region. To put it differently, it requires a certain abstraction, so that commonalities may emerge above local differences. Not all topics and research questions are meaningfully treated on the level of region, and some require zooming in to a sub-region or nation-state (or some part of it) or else zooming out to a continent or the globe as a whole.

In our work, which was dominated by a transnational agenda, the authors generally avoided defining boundaries or making "essentialist" definitions of the Balkans, be they in terms of ahistorical cultural traits or even in terms of structural definitions of *longue durée* features. Instead, in accordance with the transnational methodology, relations of various kinds between entities were studied within what is conventionally designated as "the Balkans" (and particular parts of them) but also with other parts of Europe (Central and Western Europe and Russia / the Soviet Union). While such relations also take place in space, the transnational methodology does not require a preliminary definition of spaces. Instead, they are constructed according to the needs and the scope of the research. Moreover, spaces are not necessarily bounded territories, and the category of space can be "non-territorial," such as "networks" (Philipp

59 Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte* (2002 edition), 19, 22–23. It is not clear whether Kaser is against attempts to define (and delimit) the region or against the use of the regional concept altogether. Kaser opts for the term "*südostliches Europa*" in place of "*Südosteuropa*," precisely because of its indefiniteness and absence of scholarly convention, supposed value-neutrality, and the possibility to extend it to various outlying regions depending on the problem (*Problemstellung*).

Ther) or what Jürgen Osterhammel calls "transnational social spaces" or the category of "mental maps" ("mindscape", "cognitive maps," etc.—below).[60]

Still, the composition of the Balkans/Southeastern Europe as a region with boundaries and a certain territory is addressed by Alexander Vezenkov in the present volume. Rather than trying to stipulate boundaries (his opinion on that issue can be inferred), he takes up another, reflexive and critical approach. He lays out the fluctuations in the understanding of these boundaries and territorial spans over time by simultaneously revealing the considerations and hidden motives behind such understandings. Most often, these prove to be political and geopolitical in nature even when they involve "natural boundaries" (rivers and seas). Moreover, he problematizes the very possibility of conceiving the Balkans geographically as peninsular (and thus as a "natural given"). This conception hinged on seeing Europe as a continent, which was not a "natural given" itself but became possible after the geographical discoveries. The rather different geographies of earlier eras are witness to that. The Balkans, in its most widely-agreed-on and present territorial definition, is revealed as the heir of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century "Turkey in Europe" (a product of geopolitics and religious confrontation). Vezenkov also comments on the rationale of the Balkans "opening up" to other areas: Central Europe, the Mediterranean, and more recently the Black Sea and especially the Near East.

The Balkan region is thematized in yet another way by Vezenkov, namely as a function of communications that allow, or impede, contacts and exchanges within the region and with the outside world. As demonstrated, before the railways even the main roads were neglected, and connections by sea and river (the Danube in particular) were faster and more secure than those by land. As a result, ports were better connected to the outside world (Western Europe in particular) than with the interior of the Ottoman Empire, while connections between inland towns at some distance from each other were particularly slow and difficult. The idea that the Balkans were more open to the outside and less internally unified in terms of communication and exchanges is an even more radical way to "subvert" or deconstruct the regional concept, though the author does not draw all consequences.

60 Ther, "Comparisons, Cultural Transfers," esp. 214–219. Ther's networks (and cultural spaces) consist primarily of cultural exchanges and transfers. Jürgen Osterhammel, "Transnationale Gesellschaftliche Erweiterung oder Alternative?" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27 (2001): 464–479, esp. 473–474.

Modernization and Underdevelopment

The Balkans as a region have also been approached and studied from the economic (and social) *longue-durée* perspective of modernization and underdevelopment or peripherization.[61] In fact, this is a "standard" feature in the structural descriptions, but it deserves special attention because of the preponderance of this discourse, its coupling with social structure as another important defining feature, and its wide-ranging implications. While all authors agree that the Balkans lagged behind economically in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the question is when the lag started and how to explain the economic backwardness of the region in the modern era. The Hungarian economic historians Iván Berend and György Ránki, working from the perspective of theories of (under)development (center-periphery relations), date the lag (of Eastern Europe in general) to between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, with the rise of modern capitalism in the West. Concerning the Ottoman Balkans in particular, they speak of "feudalism" and (in Marxist terms and quite wrongly) of the "Asiatic mode of production," in the sense of a strongly centralized power, communal (not private) landholding, self-sufficient rural communities, serfdom to the state, and a resulting lack of change and development.[62] Many economic historians from within the region treat the Ottoman Empire as "feudal" (in agrarian and administrative arrangements) and economically backward and regard it as the main hindrance to development.

The economic historian John Lampe also sees Ottoman hegemony as inimical to development but for different reasons. He cites the Ottoman politico-military model and the heavy burdens of warfare (a sort of "command economy"), primarily fiscal (rather than commercial) orientation, low population density, and local disorder. He emphasizes one negative factor in particular: the borderland position of the Ottoman Balkans and the military rivalry with the Habsburgs (and its fiscal imperatives). Lampe projects economic backwardness as far back as the eleventh century and especially on the eve of the Ottoman conquest, again on account of borderland position (of the First and especially of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom and of the Serbian state,

61 I am not exempt from operating within the same paradigm: Roumen Daskalov, "Development in the Balkan Periphery Prior to World War II: Some Reflections," *Südost-Forschungen* 57 (Munich) (1998): 207–244.

62 Iván Berend and György Ránki, *The European Periphery and Industrialization 1780–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 11, 42; Iván Berend and György Ránki, *East Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977), 19–20, 27–28, 31–32, 35–36, 39–40.

both neighboring the Byzantine Empire) and reciprocal exhaustion in wars. At the same time, he rejects attempts to explain Balkan backwardness under the Ottomans through dependency theories (with reference to Gundar Frank) and "world system" theories (Immanuel Wallerstein) because of the absence of significant export surplus (in staples) and large-scale disadvantageous trade required by these theories. In the early period of national independence, the external factor is not given much importance either because of weak foreign investment (except in state loans not used for productive purposes) and not-very-significant wheat exports (which could have become an "engine of development" through export-led growth, as in the staple theory).[63] In a quite revisionist book, Michael Palairet argues and substantiates that, upon independence, the Balkan states actually experienced an economic regression, which he says lasted for decades.[64]

Descriptions and explanations of the Balkans (and of Eastern Europe in general) in economic terms, whether inspired by modernization theories or by underdevelopment theories, tend to be rather one-sided and reductive—identifying modernization as only economic development—as well as Eurocentric. Furthermore, in the absence of empirical data on earlier eras, they become clearly teleological (not to speak of false renderings of Byzantine and Ottoman "feudalism").[65]

To counterbalance the one-sidedness of the purely economic approach, Maria Todorova put forward nation-building as one feature just as important (if not more so) of modernity and its temporality. In this respect as well, the overwhelming tendency is to separate and downgrade Eastern nationalism and nation-building as later, derivative, and qualitatively different ("ethnic"

63 John R. Lampe, "Imperial Borderlands or Capitalist Periphery? Redefining Balkan Backwardness, 1520–1914," in *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe*, ed. Daniel Chirot (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford: University of California Press, 1989), 177–209; John R. Lampe and Marvin R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550–1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 6–7. Kaser also dates Balkan backwardness to as early as the eleventh century using additional explanations, such as the theory of "peripheral feudalism" and Marx's idea of the "Asiatic mode of production." See Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte* (1990 edition), 121–142.

64 Michael Palairet, *The Balkan Economies c. 1800–1914: Evolution without Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

65 The teleology or projection of present economic realities and regions far back to early history is evident in Peter Gunst, *Einige Probleme der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Entwicklung Osteuropas* (Cologne: Forschungsinstitut für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte an der Universität zu Köln, 1977); Peter Gunst, "Agrarian Systems of Central and Eastern Europe," in *The Origins of Backwardness*, 53–91.

versus "civic") from the Western prototype taken as a normative model. The sense of "lag and lack" and the notion of "backwardness" and related notions such as incompleteness, failure, catching up, and self-exclusion are also characteristic of indigenous scholarship in Eastern Europe, which is itself dominated by economic historians and political scientists. Instead, Todorova argues that there was a "relative synchronicity" of nation-building in Western and Eastern Europe within a *longue durée* framework (the fifteenth to twentieth centuries). She looks at nation-building as a protracted process, gradual and uneven, initiated by the West, which spread to the rest of Europe and the other continents (while recognizing short-term phenomena of sequential development, transmission, diffusion, etc.). Rather than mere copying and "transplantation," nation-building is regarded as a global social process of rearrangement of group solidarities as a by-product of modernity (together with urbanization, bureaucratization, communications, etc., but not necessarily industrialization[66]). This is also viewed as a way to avoid the "trap of backwardness" regarding Eastern Europe, on the one hand, and "to deconstruct the category 'West' and transform it from a model-like entity into a dynamic one, which itself underwent the process unevenly and over a long period of time," on the other hand. Todorova further radicalizes this approach to a critique of the "allochronic discourse" and allochronic notion of temporality of much historical writing about Eastern Europe (similarly to cultural anthropology), that is, of looking at it with a feeling of superiority and moral complacency, as if it existed in a time different from that of the modern West.[67] From this point of view, even the idea of "contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous" ("*Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*") is problematic if it privileges one temporality (as modern) over others (as anachronistic).[68] Along these lines

66 Ernest Gellner's theory of nationalism is not very helpful in explaining its development in the Balkans in the absence of industrialization. An explanation in terms of emulation of the West is provided by Gale Stokes, *Three Eras of Political Change in Eastern Europe* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 23–35.

67 Maria Todorova, "The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, Temporality, and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism," *Slavic Review* 64, no. 1 (2005): 140–164, cited on 155.

68 Kaser applies this idea (of Ernst Bloch and Reinhart Koselleck) to the simultaneous existence of old and new in the Balkans, in which the old presumably belongs to earlier "time layers" (*Schichten*) because of the uneven development and the succession of one imperial rule by another as well as overlaps in the borderlands (the military border and Bosnia under Austrian-Hungarian rule). See Karl Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte* (1990), 143–154. A subtler interpretation is found in Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Penser l'histoire croisée: entre empirie et réflexivité," in *De la comparaison à l'histoire croisée*, Le Genre humain 42, eds. Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann

Andreas Lyberatos shows (in this volume) one more way the Balkans has been exoticized vis-à-vis the West, namely by observers perceiving the flow of time here as different from that in Europe, because of the different way of measurement in the Ottoman Empire and a different rhythm of life.

The present four-volume work shows a preference for the theoretical perspective of "multiple modernities" and the critique of Eurocentrism.[69] This is reflected in the treatment (in the third volume) of the highly reflexive native responses to the European imports (of material items, ideas, laws, institutions) and to the challenges of modernization in general. As we hope to have shown, there were quite creative "adaptations" of the transfers and imports to the local conditions (including the invention and manipulation of "tradition" to meet new needs), and there emerged "hybrid" forms. Other indigenous ideological responses to the Western European (industrial, capitalist) pattern of modernization were an admittedly modest "revisionism" of Western socialism and especially the search for a "third" (agrarian) way of development, along with recourse to imaginative "autochthonism" as a way of gaining (cultural) self-esteem in face of the technological and economic superiority of the West.

The Balkans as Legacies

While Maria Todorova became famous as a proponent of the discursive approach to the Balkans ("mental maps," "symbolic geographies"—see below), she never divorced it from the realities of the region (what she calls "ontology"). Moreover, she proposed an approach to historical regions in terms of legacies of a *longue durée*.[70] The legacies that stand for regions are definable with certain characteristics in various spheres: political, economic, social, demographic, and cultural. A legacy starts only after the political structure that engendered it has come to an end, and it is of limited duration. Todorova further differentiates between legacy as continuity and legacy as perception: the

(Paris: Seuil, 2004), 15–49. "Contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous" here means: "the intercrossing [entecroisement] of different historical temporalities which, in escaping the standard of a common measure [tout s'écartant d'un standard de mesure commun], penetrate one another [s'intérpenètrent] to the point that it is no longer possible to represent them in a linear and one-dimensional way" (40).

69 Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities," *Daedalus* (winter 2000): 1–29; Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*.

70 Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 161–183. Further developed by Maria Todorova, "Spacing Europe," 66–78.

latter remains even after the former expires. She later explained that both are real social facts but differently removed from experience; the perception is at a further remove.[71] The Balkans in particular are, according to her, the Ottoman legacy par excellence (in the same way that the categorization of Eastern Europe as a region is a communist legacy): it was dealt a blow with the emergence of the first independent nation-states and expired by the end of World War I (except in demography and popular culture), after which it remained as perception.

Todorova argues that the concept of legacy is an improvement over the concept of a region in that it gives more attention to time while retaining spatiality. She adds the category of "historical period" to designate the duration of the political entities that created legacies (or traditions). Historical periods may be synchronic or overlapping, consecutive or separated by gaps. Thus the eras of the Roman, Byzantine, and early Ottoman Empires were synchronic or overlapping with the period of the great migrations from Central Asia (which also left legacies). The historical legacies, however, are overlapping by definition, even though they fade away in intensity with time. The legacy concept thus takes into account the relativity of regional borders over long periods. Todorova visualizes a region as a palimpsest picture of the various legacies in different colors, horizontally superimposed one upon the other with noncoinciding but partly overlapping borders and with some cognate elements (traits) cutting "vertically" through different legacies.[72] Sundhaussen also addressed the problem of the region's boundaries shifting over time but opted for a different solution in terms of a "core" and outlying space. He differentiated between the Balkans proper (with the Balkan range as a northern boundary) as the core of the region with a concentration and density of certain traits (the result of overlaying the Byzantine and the Ottoman legacies) and the wider region of Southeastern Europe, where some of these traits also obtain, but others do not.[73] In fact, when speaking about legacies, he comes close to

71 Todorova, "Spacing Europe," 69.

72 Ibid., 68–69, 74, 75–78.

73 Sundhaussen, "Europa balcanica," 632–638, 651. According to Sundhaussen, in spite of the different spread of the particular parameters, one can work out the cluster of features (*Merkmalcluster*) that gives the Balkans a singular profile. See also Sundhaussen, "Was ist Südosteuropa," 96, 99–100. Sundhaussen sees the Balkans as the interpenetration (*Durchdringung*) or intersection (*Schnittmenge*) of two historical entities—the Byzantine-Orthodox and the Ottoman-Islamic. Southeastern Europe as a "heuristic concept" consists of one space of thickening or concentration (*Verdichtungsraum*) plus a space of interaction and diffusion (of the features) to the north and to the east (101).

Todorova but in the end retains the preference for fixed spatiality that she tried to destabilize.

In fact, there is an honorable tradition of seeing the Balkans as legacies of civilizations, including the aforementioned Jovan Cvijić, Nicolae Iorga, Petar Skok, and Milan Budimir. There has also been a more recent interest in the Ottoman and other imperial legacies in the Balkans.[74] The differences concern what legacy is being emphasized (the Byzantine versus the Ottoman), what particular features, the question of continuity, and finally, the enduring value attitude, and, connected with it, how strongly the Balkans are contrasted to post-medieval Western European civilization (Huntington's "clash of civilizations" taken to the extreme). The interest in the perception of legacies has also been kept alive.[75]

The present authors were also interested in legacies but approached them indirectly. They looked (in the third volume of this work) at how legacies were perceived and appropriated and used in national identity-building to identify with a previous "we" and to construct a continuity of history in rival national/ist narratives—another aspect of the issue of legacies in perception. This is how contemporary nations retroactively create their predecessors and claim their legacies. To express it in a Borgesian way, the progeny engenders its forefathers. Precisely in showing the parallel and sometimes competing claims or denials of legacies and predecessors, one can understand how closely connected the Balkan peoples were and still are, even as they try to carve out a past exclusively their own, thus nationalizing history.[76]

The Balkanist Discourse

The other basic approach to the Balkans draws its inspiration from post-colonial, post-structuralist studies of discourse (in the Foucauldian sense of power-knowledge), representations and images ("imagology"). It was inspired by

74 Leon Carl Brown, ed., *Imperial "Legacy": The Ottoman Imprint on the Balkans and the Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). The substance and specificity of the Ottoman imperial system, hence legacy, is treated in a chapter by Halil Inalcik. The chapter by Maria Todorova on the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans is basically the same as in her *Imagining the Balkans*. See also Raymond Detrez and Barbara Segaert, eds., *Europe and the Historical Legacies in the Balkans* (Brussels: Peter Lang), 2008.

75 Sylvie Gangloff, ed., *The Perception of the Ottoman Legacy in the Balkans* (Paris: L'Harmattan), 2005.

76 See in this vein Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz, eds., *Nationalizing the Past: Historians as Nation Builders in Modern Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

Edward Said's Orientalism and Larry Wolff's "invention" of Eastern Europe by the Enlightenment.[77] Todorova's seminal study deals primarily (though not only) with the mostly negative discursive constructions and "mental maps" of the Balkans in the West, especially by Western travelers, journalists, writers, and politicians. Such constructions she calls "Balkanism" (playing on Edward Said's Orientalism).[78] It is not necessary here to go into the particular characteristics of Balkanism and its differences from the Orientalist discourse. It is important to note that, just as with the "invention" of Eastern Europe in general, it helped assert outsiders' intellectual mastery of the region, even if in this case it did not amount to outright colonization. In the same vein, though with a narrower focus, Vesna Goldsworthy studied the representations of the Balkans in Western literary texts.[79]

Todorova's critique of the Balkanist discourse, images, and mental mapping engendered heated debate. A central point (made by Sundhaussen) concerns the relation of the Balkanist discourse to "realities"—both because of the strong critique of it and because of the consideration that such a discourse, even if negative, is not necessarily false.[80] In response, Todorova affirms the primacy of "mental maps" (or scripts, schemata, or frames), which structure the processes of perception and go into the reworking of the information. Balkanism is a particularly stubborn such "script" or "frame." It evolved in journalism, politics, and literature during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries and reached its peak around the Balkan wars and World War I (and again after 1989), becoming a "discursive hardening" (with reference to James Clifford) and shaping opinions and actions toward the region. Todorova says

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77 Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

78 Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, esp. the introduction; Maria Todorova, "The Balkans: From Discovery to Invention," *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (1994): 453–483. One should mention the pioneering work by John Allcock, "Constructing the Balkans," in *Black Lambs and Grey Falcons: Women Travelers in the Balkans*, eds. John Allcock and Antonia Young (Bradford, UK: Bradford University Press, 1991), 170–191.

79 Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of Imagination* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press), 1998.

80 Sundhaussen, "Europa balcanica," 652. Other critiques of Todorova's concept of Balkanism appear in Sundhaussen, "Der Balkan," 608–624: that the Balkans were always marginal for the West and were never significant enough to the West to constitute, for instance, its "alter ego"; that she did not analyze the negative image of the Balkans issuing from the Balkan societies themselves and their "Orientalism" (negative images of the Turks); and she does not consider the negative images of the West in the Balkans (Occidentalism) (609–611, 616–617).

she searched for Balkanism in journalism, not academic works, and admits that the academic literature on the field is complex and different from the popular mythology about the Balkans. Finally, she says she has proposed her own Balkan "ontology" in the conventions of scholarly research (in the chapter "Qu'est-ce qu'il y a hors du text?"). Though it is admittedly another "mental map," she believes it is a more fitting understanding (and one that still does not claim that the world "in itself" and the world in representation coincide).[81] Todorova agrees with Sundhaussen's remark that "not all negative images of the Balkans are false because they are negative" and even goes a step further to affirm that stereotypes are often based on true and observable features. She is questioning not the contents of these features but their status and function as stereotypes, i.e., as overgeneralizations instrumentalized in individual and collective action.[82]

Another relevant critique (by Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis) is that the post-colonial approach says more about Othering from outside (from the hegemonic West) than about the identity of the Balkan self (except when external representations are accepted and internalized) and thus acts to marginalize as well. Instead, these authors favor a more balanced approach of taking cognizance of how the East looks west, especially of the Balkan abuses of "the map of civilization" and manipulations of notions of geography and of "civilization," as well as indigenously produced identities plus the Russian and the Ottoman perspectives.[83] The excesses and the one-sidedness of post-colonial/post-structuralist "Orientalist" approaches should thus be counterbalanced by "Occidentalist" approaches (meaning a harsh critique of the West[84]).

Further works in the same discursive vein studied popular representations of the Balkans from within and the "symbolic geographies" of particular countries.[85] The central question here is how one deals with the stigma of being "Balkan"—whether it is internalized or passed on to the neighbor, thus

81 Todorova, "Der Balkan als Analysekategorie," 470–474.

82 Ibid., 488.

83 Bracewell and Drace-Francis, "South-Eastern Europe," 56–60. On a similar note, see Sundhaussen, "Der Balkan: Ein Plädoyer," 609–611, 616–617.

84 Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies* (New York: Penguin, 2004).

85 Sorin Antohi, "Romania and the Balkans: From Geocultural Bovarism to Ethnic Ontology," *Transit*, 2002, no. 21. In this vein, see also Adrian Cioroianu, "The Impossible Escape: Romanians and the Balkans," in *Balkan as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation*, eds. Dušan Bjelić and Obrad Savić (London and Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 209–233.

producing "nesting Orientalisms" (Milica Bakić-Hayden and Robert Hayden[86]) or dealt with in another way, including by a positive reappraisal. It is even possible to play on the Western images of the Balkans (e.g., in Kusturica's films) or to "sell" the Balkans as a tourist destination or gastronomical or another attraction.

Benjamin Schenk attempted to reconcile the "historical regions" ("realist" or "objectivist") approach and the "mental maps" ("constructivist") approach by seeing them as complementary rather than incompatible. He seems to side more with the "realists" than with the "constructivists" (Larry Wolff and Maria Todorova), whose views he simplifies and misrepresents as meaning that historical regions are mere "inventions," implying pure fantasies. His mediation consists of acknowledging that "historical regions," even when studied in a scholarly and comparative way (with the usual caveats that they are "working tools" and "heuristic devices"), also have a symbolic dimension in the very terms (their names), which are used as political concepts in discourses of power and identity. Schenk concludes by saying that historical regions are not only historical spaces with specific structures but also concepts, inventions, spaces of desire, and tools in political discourses.[87]

In my opinion, the dichotomy in the title of Schenk's article—"real" versus "invented"—is misleading. There are always realities that are perceived through differently configured cognitive lenses and reshaped in the mind ("imagined") in one way or another according to various motives, prejudices, normative assumptions, or purposes. These "images," "representations," "mental maps" (mostly in discourses), etc., then feed back into the subsequent perception and representation of the "realities" as a cognitive basis for dealing with them with entirely real effects. In another article concerned with "mental mapping" and buttressed by the authority of neurobiologists and cognitive psychologists, Schenk himself moves in the direction of this approach, as he admits that the names for regions are not value-neutral terms but politically evolved, and that cognitive maps are factors in the historical process. Thus, according to him, while historians will still use geographical regions as objects

86 Milica Bakić-Hayden and Robert Hayden, "Orientalist Variations on the Theme 'Balkans': Symbolic Geography in Recent Yugoslav Cultural Politics," *Slavic Review* 51, no. 1 (1992): 1–15; Milica Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (1995): 917–931.

87 Benjamin Schenk, "The Historical Regions of Europe: Real or Invented? Some Remarks on Historical Comparison and Mental Mapping," in Benjamin Schenk, *Beyond the Nation: Writing European History Today* (St. Petersburg: Zentrum für Deutschland und Europastudien, 2004), 15–24.

of study, they should be aware "of the historicity and the political character of the terms and of the constructed character of the concepts of space that go with them."[88]

The geopolitical aspect of constructing a region is particularly pervasive. It is precisely the geopolitical aspect that heightens our awareness that regions are "constructed" by the power centers of the world and often only underwritten and "academically" legitimized by scholars.[89] This is amply substantiated in the Balkan case: "Turkey in Europe" during the Ottoman Empire, the *Südosteuropäische Wirtschaftsraum* ("economic space") of the Third Reich,[90] and—after being subsumed under the notion of communist Eastern Europe during the Cold War—now Southeastern Europe (integrated into the European Union) and the (not yet integrated) "Western Balkans." I have already mentioned Vezenkov's contribution to this theme. The geopolitical construction of the sub-region Dobrudja (north and south of the Danubian delta) by the European Great Powers is tackled by Constantin Iordachi in this volume.

The present volume also includes a study by Diana Mishkova of Balkan scholarship (also known as Balkan studies or Balkanology) and its national traditions, institutions, journals, and representative authors, with special attention to its ideological and geo/political background: motivations, biases, and projects.[91] This study of the Balkanist (extra-scholarly) dimension of Balkan scholarship, or what the author calls "academic Balkanisms," can be regarded as complementing Maria Todorova's work on Balkanist discourses in the public sphere, in addition to paying more attention to local academic knowledge production (the Balkan "subaltern"). As Mishkova convincingly shows, there were actually many academic Balkanisms with different ideologo-political motivations and agendas, and it is hardly possible to disentangle the political from the

88 Benjamin Schenk, "Mental Maps. Die Konstruktion von geographischen Räumen in Europa seit der Aufklärung," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 3 (2002): 493–514, cited on 514.

89 On the constructivist view of regions as "geo/political projects" with various purposes, see Dimitar Bechev, *Constructing South East Europe: The Politics of Balkan Regional Cooperation* (Palgrave Macmillan), 2011. About the "politics of spacing," see Todorova, "Spacing Europe," 75–78.

90 In Franz Ronnenberger's words: "The new political notion 'Southeast Europe' derives solely from Germany" ("Die neue politische Begriffsbilding 'Südosteuropa' geht eizig und allein von Deutschland aus"). Quoted from Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte* (1990), 105–106.

91 See also Diana Mishkova, "The Politics of Regionalist Science: The Balkans as a Supranational Space in Late Nineteenth Century Academic Projects," *East Central Europe* 39 (2012): 266–303.

"purely" academic dimension; academics' comparative freedom from current political projects simply allowed them to develop their own scholarly politics.

Beyond Region: Transnationalism

A new (and not so new) approach to the Balkans and to regions and space in general is connected with the application of transnational methods and studies. That is where this project is basically positioned. As is widely recognized, the Balkans were and still are a zone of intensive contacts and exchanges, shared legacies, mutual influences, and interdependencies. Our central idea was to apply transnational or relational methodology to the history of the region. Though we shared a belief in the strongly entangled character of the Balkans in the period of "isolationist" nation-states as well, the application of transnational approaches does not require precommitment to an "ontological" picture of a certain kind, as the method is relatively autonomous from the "ontology"; more precisely, it brings about its own selection, emphases, and reconfigurations of the object of study. The present scholars are far from being the first to explore Balkan history from such a perspective. They follow in the footsteps of Shishmanov and Skok and Budimir, as well as, to a point, Iorga, to name just some scholars from the region. As has been rightly pointed out, the transnational approaches were actually developed *avant la lettre* in area studies.[92] The renewed interest in transnational relational approaches (to use the generic name) is connected with the end of the Cold War, European integration, and the phenomena of globalization.[93] But every scholarly interest is in context, and recognizing this does not invalidate it.

As is well known, there are several varieties of transnational or relational ways of doing history.[94] These include (traditional) comparisons; transfer studies (the first such method to develop); shared and connected history; entangled history; and perhaps the most sophisticated, at least in terms of theoretical

92 Ther, "Comparisons, Cultural Transfers," 205.

93 On the time-specific historical context of transnational history, see Hartmut Kaelble, "Between Comparison and Transfers—And What Now? A French-German Debate," in *Comparative and Transnational History*, 35–36. Kaelble lists such developments as globalization, European integration, loosening of the strong loyalties to the European nation-states, and new kinds of transnational wars.

94 On the concept of "transnational history," see Jürgen Osterhammel, "A 'Transnational' History of Society: Continuity or New Departure?" in *Comparative and Transnational History*, 39–51, esp. 44–46.

elaboration—*histoire croisée*.[95] To quote Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt: "What these different new approaches share is a common interest in the crossing of borders between nations, regions, continents or other spaces, in all kinds of encounters, perceptions, movements, relations and interactions between them, and in the way they perceived, influenced, stamped and constituted one another"; "the entanglement-oriented approaches stress the connections, the continuity, the belonging-together, the hybridity of observable spaces or analytical units."[96]

We started this research with the transnational and relational perspective and methodology in mind. But rather than committing to one of the aforementioned varieties, we chose the most appropriate method as we proceeded and according to the selected topics and the available materials. Moreover, it is only now in retrospect that we can account more clearly for what was actually done in terms of methodology.

To begin with the most obvious, transfer studies were practiced (especially in the second volume).[97] We dealt with transfers and imports, most often from outside the region, especially from Western Europe and some from Russia / the Soviet Union, and the responses they provoked. Admittedly, we were basically concerned with the recipient or point of destination (place of arrival) and with the process of translation or transformation. Ideological, legal, and institutional transfers of ideas, laws, institutions, and so on were at the center of interest.[98] It is here that the permeability and receptiveness of the Balkans, especially in the modern era, come into relief. The guiding idea was to avoid the usual biases in regarding the transfers and "transplants" as distortions and corruptions of the authentic model, and of its functioning in the new milieu as malfunctioning—not least because this wrongly presumes a similarity of

95 A useful summary of these varieties and their combinations is in Hartmut Kaelble, "Between Comparison and Transfers," 34–38.

96 Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Comparison and Beyond: Traditions, Scope, and Perspectives of Comparative History," in *Comparative and Transnational History*, 1–30, esp. 19–20.

97 Transfer studies were pioneered by Michel Espagne and Michael Werner, eds., *Transferts culturels. Les relations interculturelles dans l'espace franco-allemand* (*XVIII^e–XX^e siècles*) (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les civilisations, 1988); Michel Espagne, *Les transferts culturels franco-allemands* (Paris: PUF, 1999).

98 On legal transfers or legal transplants or legal borrowing, see David Nelken, "Comparatists and Transferability," in *Comparative Legal Studies: Traditions and Transitions*, eds. Pierre Legrand and Roderick Munday (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 437–466. On political transfer, see Henk te Velde, "Political Transfer: An Introduction," *European Review of History / Revue européennne d'histoire* 12, no. 2 (2005): 205–221.

conditions at both ends. Instead we looked at the transfers as undergoing a normal process of adaptation or accommodation to the local conditions and practices that is called "domestication" (or "naturalization"). The mixing with local practices often creates something new and different—a hybrid, not necessarily something bad.

As is to be expected, not only most modern legal and institutional transfers but also most modern ideas and ideologies came from outside the region. Ironically, so did nationalism, which, in popular Western Balkanist discourses, would become something like a trademark of the region. That is why long-distance transfers, not those from contiguous areas, are more characteristic of the region in the modern era: modernity came from outside. But in the earlier Ottoman era and later on, as regards folklore, cuisine, customs, patterns of behavior, and so on, the intra-regional dimension of transfer prevailed. One such kind of transfer is treated in this volume—the diffusion of a certain type of house throughout the region and in parts of Asia Minor, a design ironically regarded everywhere as "national."

Comparisons were also made.[99] I would rather not enter here into the debate between transfer studies and comparative studies[100] or the attempts to combine them[101] (or to combine comparative studies with entangled history and

99 Because comparison has been practiced all along, there is enormous literature on this method or (as some call it) practice. Marc Bloch's appeal for comparative history remains a classic: Marc Bloch, "Toward a Comparative History of European Societies," in *Enterprise and Secular Change*, ed. Frederic C. Lane (Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, 1953), 494–521, originally published as "Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes," *Revue de synthèse historique*, no. 46 (1928): 15–50. Some recent literature on comparison: Nancy L. Green, "Forms of Comparison," in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, eds. Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 41–56; Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, "Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems," in *Comparison and History*, 23–39, and the other essays in that volume; Hartmut Kaelble and Jürgen Schriewer, eds., *Vergleich und Transfer. Komparatistik in den Sozial-, Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus Verlag, 2003); Jürgen Kocka, "Comparison and Beyond," *History and Theory* 42, no. 1 (2003): 39–44.

100 Comparativism came under attack by the proponent of transfer studies Michel Espagne, "Sur les limites du comparatisme en histoire culturelle," *Genèses* 17, no. 17 (1994): 112–121. The argument that comparison is focused on synchrony (rather than diachrony) and is based on the assumption of static units rather than processes appears in Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity," *History and Theory* 45 (February 2006): 30–50, esp. 35–36.

101 For example, Johannes Paulmann, "Internationaler Vergleich und interkultureller Transfer. Zwei Forschungsansätze zur europäischen Geschichte des 18. bis 20. Jahrhunderts,"

histoire croisée[102]). Still, one aspect concerning the units of comparison should be mentioned: even though comparison is practiced across nation-states and regions, it tends to reconfirm such spatial divisions. This is due to the emphasis on contrasts and, on a more basic level, because one takes the units compared as givens (arguably, this is also the case with transfer studies). There is also the already noted feature of East-West comparisons to privilege (asymmetrically) the West in the sense that one takes its features as a norm and looks for similar features in "the East," with the result that one finds them less manifest or lacking. As Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis note, comparing and contrasting the Balkans to Western Europe as a model often produces accounts of similarities or "deviations" (always on the part of the Balkans), makes use of models and theories from elsewhere, and leads to framing the questions inappropriately (e.g., in discussions of whether the Ottoman system was "feudal," or of Balkan "backwardness"). Finally, it goes along with an emphasis on "unity" and the coherence of both entities at the expense of their variety, complexity, and changing character.[103]

The Balkans as a region present fertile soil for practicing comparisons between adjacent and contemporaneous societies of the type favored by Marc Bloch (though recently there have been calls for "comparing the incomparable"[104]). Admittedly, some of our comparisons were of the asymmetrical type (privileging one of the entities) and made without regard to processes leading to convergences or divergences but with attention to conditions and circumstances of the compared cases and places. Yet they were useful for the usual purpose of establishing similarities and differences, for instance, between types of agrarianism or liberalism or between varieties of populism or socialism.

A kind of "(shared and) connected history" was also practiced, though not on connections between metropoles and colonies, or colonizers and colonized, and not, in any case, on places very distant from each other.[105] Instead,

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Historische Zeitschrift 267 (1998): 649–685, esp. 681–685; Jürgen Osterhammel, "A 'Transnational' History of Society," 39–51. The argument is summarized by Hartmut Kaelble, "Between Comparison and Transfers," 35.

102 Jürgen Kocka, "Comparison and Beyond," 43–44; Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Comparison and Beyond," 20–21; Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, "Comparative History," 31–33.

103 Bracewell and Drace-Francis, "South-Eastern Europe," 51.

104 Marcel Detienne, *Comparer l'incomparable* (Paris: Seuil, 2000).

105 The notion of "connected history" is elaborated by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," in *Beyond Binary Histories: Re-Imagining Eurasia to c. 1830*, ed. Victor Lieberman (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan

we explored connectedness between the Balkan nations that emerged in a shared Ottoman matrix and between nation-states that emerged as a result of secession from the Ottoman Empire but that, for a while, carried on the Empire's legacy. The era of divisive nationalism could not entirely sever such connections and created new ones. We also explored interconnections (even through disputes) between the national Balkan historiographies that emerged as a result of studying long-ago common legacies, such as the Byzantine and even the Thracian legacy, in their efforts to establish historical continuities for their own nations.

The present authors showed a preference for the "entangled history" (*Verflechtungsgeschichte*)[106] approach and used some elements of the cognate

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Press, 1999), 289–316. "Connected history" (as opposed to national histories and area studies) is used here to denote the global and connected character of distant parts of the world in the early modern period and some "unifying features" between them. See also Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: From the Tagus to the Ganges* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: Mughals and Franks* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004). For the notion and application of "connected history," see also Serge Gruzinski, "Les mondes mêlés de la monarchie catholique et autres 'connected histories,'" *Annales: Histoire, sciences sociales* 56, no. 1 (2001): 85–117. Gruzinski applies this notion to relations and exchanges between the Spanish Catholic monarchy and its colonies across the ocean—he calls these "*mondes mêlés de la monarchie*" or "hybrid societies" and speaks of various types of mixing under the notion of "*métissage*."

106 The notion of "entangled history" appeared in postcolonial studies and stressed relations between colonizers and colonized societies, maintaining that transfers also take place from the colonies to the mother countries (albeit less frequently). The concept was developed by Shalini Randeria, "Geteilte Geschichte und verwobene Moderne," in *Zukunfsentwürfe: Ideen für eine Kultur der Veränderung*, eds. Jörn Rüsen, Hanna Leitgeb, and Norbert Jegelka (Frankfurt and New York: Campus Verlag, 1999), 87–96. Randeria argues here a concept of "entangled" (*verwobene, verflochtete*) modernity within a "shared" or common (*Geteilte, gemeinsam*) history in a relational and interactional perspective instead of taking the European model and the European path of development as universal and their traits or features as the norm and everything else as "deviations." A more thorough explication appears in Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria, "Einleitung: Geteilte Geschichten—Europa in einer postcolonialen Welt," in *Jenseits des Europazentrismus. Postcoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*, eds. Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria (Frankfurt and New York, Campus Verlag, 2002), 9–49. According to Conrad and Randeria, the concept of *Geteilte Geschichten* is used to denote from a postcolonial perspective the entanglement (*Verwobenheit* or *Verflechtung*) of the European with the non-European world and imperialism as the common frame of the "mutual constitution of metropolis and colonies" (10), while the term *histoire croisée* is reserved for intra-European transnational relations (11). Randeria's concept of "*geteilen Geschichten*,"

histoire croisée (below). While "entangled history" was initially developed concerning relations between colonizers and colonized societies, metropolis and peripheries—in view of revealing their entangled (*verflechtete, verworbene*) histories and even "mutual constitution" within a shared modernity—it was appropriately applied to constellations in Europe. An example is Philipp Ther's treatment of Central Eastern Europe in terms of entangled histories and what he also calls the "history of relations" (or "relational history"), with the idea that this type of relation goes beyond transfers, contacts, and exchanges to deeper "mutual conditionality," "mutual correlation," "structural connectedness," or even "structural dependence"—and presupposes nearness, unlike transfers taking place from a distance. Ther is particularly interested in the entangled character of German and East Central European history, especially in the mutual articulation of nationalisms, the effects of the presence of sizable minorities on the German polity and democracy, and so on.[107]

We found the entangled-history approach to be particularly relevant to the Balkans, as the method was attuned to the Balkans' "ontology" of a long history of contacts, exchanges, and interactions. The interactions were intense and affected two or more entities, leading to interdependences and mutual articulations in a way that was constitutive to them all. In particular, we studied the long-standing and often conflict-ridden interactions and entanglements between the Bulgarian and the Greek, and the Romanian and the Greek, national movements; the formation of Macedonian nationalism in interaction with Bulgarian, Serb, and Greek nationalisms; and the entanglements of even national communisms or communist nationalisms. The approach also proved useful in studying the formation of national languages with regard to

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whose connotations (in English) oscillate between "shared" and "divided," implies the ambivalence of the exchange and the interaction between Europe and the non-European world (17–18). For applications of the concept of entangled history, see Shalini Randeria, "Entangled Histories of Uneven Modernities: Civil Society, Caste Solidarities and Legal Pluralism in Post-Colonial India," in *Unraveling Ties: From Social Cohesion to New Practices of Connectedness*, eds. Yehuda Elkana, Ivan Krastev, Elísio Macamo, and Shalini Randeria (Frankfurt and New York: Campus Verlag, 2006), 284–311. See also Sebastian Conrad, "Double Marginalization: A Plea for a Transnational Perspective on German History," in *Comparative and Transnational History*, 52–76; Sebastian Conrad, "Entangled Memories: Versions of the Past in Germany and Japan, 1945–2001," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 1 (2003), 85–99.

107 Philipp Ther, "Beyond the Nation: The Relational Basis of Comparative History of Germany and Europe," *Central European History* 36, no. 1 (2005), 45–73, esp. 68, 70–71. This is combined with an appeal to go beyond the national framing of historiography to multiple histories of one country (instead of one master narrative).

the Other and influenced by the Other in the very attempt to differentiate oneself through language. The approach also proved useful in dealing with Balkan national historiographies that became very much "entangled" exactly when they tried to appropriate for themselves a common and shared past for purposes of their own identity building.

It is precisely in revealing particular and sometimes unexpected interconnections, interactions, crisscrossings, and entanglements within the region and with other places that the strength and innovativeness of this endeavor can be seen. Many of these interactions and entanglements were basic in nation-building and ideological/political projects and identities. However, we did not regard it as our task to "deconstruct" them in some direct and militant way but rather to reveal the connections and entanglements between the national contexts in the Balkans in an undogmatic way that may help us rethink and overcome the national clichés of separateness and isolation.

The *histoire croisée* (literally: "crossed" history) approach was pioneered and propagated in recent decades by Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, and it is theoretically particularly sophisticated.[108] It was initially applied to the study of French-German relations and then tried on other cases.[109] I cannot enter here into its subtleties or how Werner and Zimmermann see it as especially different from the comparative approach and transfer studies (but also from the "shared and connected" and "entangled history" approaches

108 Werner and Zimmermann, "Penser l'histoire croisée," 15–49; Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée." A slightly reworked version of "Penser l'histoire croisée" and of their article "Penser l'histoire croisée: entre empirie et réflexivité," *Annales: Histoire, sciences sociales* 58, no. 1 (2003): 7–36 is Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Vergleich, Transfer, Verflechtung. Der Ansatz der Histoire croisée und die Herausforderung des Transnationalen," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 4 (2002): 607–636.

109 For example, Bénédicte Zimmermann, Claude Didry, and Peter Wagner, eds., *Le travail et la nation. Histoire croisée de la France et de l'Allemagne* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences De L'Homme, 1999). To cite the editors' introduction: "Their similarities and their differences [of French and German societies] are [. . .] the fruit of one *histoire croisée* during which 'French' and 'German' formed their national identities in relation to each other through borrowing and re-appropriation or rejection or even assimilation in the extreme case of the Occupation" (3). A German proponent of *histoire croisée* is Mathias Middell: see Michel Espagne and Mathias Middell, eds., *Von der Elbe bis an die Seine: Kulturtransfer zwischen Sachsen und Frankreich im 18. and 19. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1999). On German-French "crossings" of social policies in particular, see also the French scholar Sandrine Kott, "Gemeinschaft oder Solidarität? Unterschiedliche Modelle der französischen und deutschen Sozialpolitik am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 22, no. 3 (1996): 311–330.

that they consider closer).[110] Suffice it to say that some features of the *histoire croisée* approach (as described by its proponents) were particularly important for this research. First (to simplify matters greatly), instead of assuming pre-existing entities and protagonists, it revealed their emergence in the course of interaction, through the logic of differentiation and self-articulation in reciprocity—as well as their being continually transformed by the very process of interaction. Thus there were still no nations when national activists were struggling for the hearts and minds of their compatriots; national territories were something imagined or dreamed of by a minority; instead of standardized languages, there were "dialects" (more neutrally, language varieties), and it was not clear which one would emerge as the norm and still less clear that some would fuse or split later on.

Second, rather than taking a one-sided view of the interacting objects under investigation or aiming at an equidistant treatment of them (*tertium comparationis* of the comparative approach), *histoire croisée* requires that the scholar shifts points of view or perspectives on the interacting entities and thus is more reflexive. There are various points of view that need to be "crossed" in order to understand the "constitution" of the object of research—those that pertain to the interacting entities, to later observers of the interaction, and to the present observer (the historian). The researcher has to historicize the differing viewpoints and understand how they are socially grounded or reflect competition in power struggles. Moreover, s/he has to perform some translation or balancing between them but also position himself or herself among those historically constituted vantage points that take part in the construction of the object itself (as Max Weber emphasized long ago). In the confrontation of the various viewpoints (but also of the language and concepts, disciplinary traditions, and experiences that go with them), which stamp the way of seeing, there occurs not only a mutual highlighting of the points of observation and

110 According to its proponents, *histoire croisée* differs most from comparative history and transfer studies and, like "connected" and "entangled" history, presents an alternative to them. Though each of those alternatives has distinct features, they all belong to the family of "relational" approaches. See Werner and Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity," 31–32. Other authors identify the main features of *histoire croisée* as skepticism of nationally oriented perspectives; taking into account the fundamentally different perspectives of the societies being compared, hence the need to switch perspectives and become increasingly reflexive; going beyond a binational orientation to consider multilateral approaches and research; the importance of reflecting upon the categories of analysis; and the exercise of self-reflexivity. See Kaelble, "Between Comparison and Transfers," 35; Haupt and Kocka, "Comparative History: Methods, Aims," 33.

ways of seeing but also a certain balancing and relativization, which may lead to questioning and perhaps correcting one's own position (in any case, it does not allow for the absolutization of standpoints).[111] In general, *histoire croisée* commends itself for its reflexivity on a number of counts, such as the use of concepts and categories (which have to be historicized), one's own socialization in a certain tradition and scholarly discipline, and the choice of scales of analysis.

To take some examples from our four-volume work: the authors tried to historicize various contemporary and later reactions to the modernizing innovations in the Balkans and their effects. In the study of nation-building, the points of view of rival nationalist protagonists and "their" national historians, of other observers, and so on were "crossed." The relativizing effect of shifting the various perspectives to events and processes was used in order to gain a distance from the usual national and often nationalist biases and to arrive at a (balancing) viewpoint. At a further remove, points of criss-crossing and intersections between national historiographies engaged in battles over a shared historical past (to symbolically appropriate territories and populations) were also studied. One of the impulses behind this endeavor—and in doing regional history in general—was to overcome the parochial and heavily biased national narratives still prevalent in the Balkans. The authors were reacting against such nationalist illusions as the early existence of the nation, as well as its unity and continuity in a certain territory. But they were also reacting—more fundamentally—against the one-sidedness of the national narratives. Saying that we tried to overcome nationalist biases (including those we may have absorbed in our own education) does not commit us to globalism or neoliberalism, even though these are part of the context that makes possible the distancing from (the excesses of) nationalism and the exposure of its blind spots and illusions. That said, of course, I cannot speak for each contributor in this specific regard.

Of course, no approach is universal in its scope of application. The entangled history and *histoire croisée* in particular presuppose intense and prolonged contacts and exchanges in the "object" under study (of two or more entities) that go in both directions and have effects on two or more interacting entities.

111 Werner and Zimmermann, "Vergleich, Transfer," 618–620, 623–626, 632–633, 636 (on the "relativizing" effect in particular: 632); Werner and Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée," 38–41. But in this piece they emphatically reject the idea that the intercrossing of perspectives or shifting of viewpoints leads to relativist indecisiveness or infinite speculations. Instead they affirm the gain in knowledge and generation of meaning (49–50).

Where such conditions could not be found, other relational and transnational methods (mentioned above) were applied. These differ in the mode of relatedness they presuppose: intensity of contacts, one- or two-sidedness (or, for several entities, multi-sided interaction), the presence/absence of a shared past, or common "origins," or perhaps also contiguity/spatial distance. In fact, no method is intrinsically superior to others, even if it may be more sophisticated. Rather, each method is specifically appropriate for studying certain situations and a certain type of transnational relations or interactions and less appropriate for dealing with others. There are, for example, one-directional transfers, two-way exchanges and flows or multi-sided interactions, intense entanglements and intertwining, "structural" interdependence, and so on that require different methodologies (and various ways of proceeding with the material). The choice of method also depends on the materials available. The overall title of this series of volumes reflects the significance we attributed to entangled history and *histoire croisée* in studying the Balkans.

Finally, the transnational methods (especially "entangled" and "crossed" histories) affect the understanding of territorial units, both nation-states and regions. In the extreme case, their utility as units of analysis is denied. To quote a strong statement by Subrahmanyam, the global and connected character of the world in the early modern period cannot be accounted for in terms of area studies (in this case Southeast Asian) with the positing of structural (mostly essentialist) characteristics, such as "caste" or other "civilization constants": "It is as if these conventional units of analysis, fortuitously defined as givens for the intellectually slothful, and the result of complex (even murky) processes of academic and non-academic engagement, somehow become real and overwhelming. Having helped create these Frankenstein's monsters, we are obliged to praise them for their beauty, rather than grudgingly acknowledge their limited functional utility."[112]

The authors of the present work did not go to the extreme of dispensing with regions altogether and used the conventional designation "Balkans," which is, in fact, the most established designation of any European sub-region, as a point of departure and orientation. Yet the advantage of the transnational methods is that they do not commit one to a "substantial" (or ontological) understanding of the region, whether in terms of traits or structures or even legacies. We thus have been able to move freely and explore various exchanges and entanglements both within and outside the region, transcending regionalism.

112 Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories," 297–298.

CHAPTER 2

Academic Balkanisms: Scholarly Discourses of the Balkans and Southeastern Europe

Diana Mishkova

This chapter deals with the scholarly conceptualizations and discourses of the Balkans, with an emphasis on their production within the region from the early nineteenth to the late twentieth century. For students of the region, the potential benefits of such a focus seem obvious, but my interest in it is inspired by several broader considerations.

In the last few decades much has been written, usually from a post-colonial perspective, about the Balkans as a vicious construct of the West, serving Western identity- and power politics. "Balkan" self-understanding, to the extent that it is considered in such literature at all, is treated as something formed by internalizing external representations and hence as a playground of "nesting Orientalisms." This essay reverses the perspective and looks at the Balkans primarily from within the Balkans towards its proper "self" and the outside world (where the West is an important referent but not the only one). It attempts to unravel the process of regional "identity-building" and construction of regional discourses with the resources of scholarship by delving into some of the paradigmatic scholarly conceptualizations of the region, which had originated in various academic and disciplinary sub-cultures in the region. External scholarly conceptualizations are also surveyed, primarily in order to detect connections or disjunctions with the local discourses but also to indicate the variety of "Eastern" and "Western" Balkanisms. The history of Southeast European studies—or more properly put, the ways various generations and academic subcultures defined the object of their inquiries in such terms across a field that brings together (geo)politics, historiographical and methodological currents, and disciplinary and institutional venues—provides the broader research canvas of this article.

In the process, this article looks into the relationship between the regionalist frameworks of interpretation and the "national sciences." More specifically, it seeks to ascertain the extent to which regional approaches in the humanities and social sciences posed a challenge to nation-centered (and ethnocentric) scholarship and presented an alternative to methodological nationalism. The political and ideological implications of this scholarship form another axis of

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research designed to underscore diverse and contested academic notions of the Balkans.

My aim in what follows is thus threefold: first, to analyze the ways the Balkans/Southeastern Europe was used as an analytical category and a framework of scholarly interpretation and self-narration; second, to assess its intricate relationship to the national modalities of representation, particularly national narratives of history; and, third, to foreground its political connotations and usages. The post-1989 re-conceptualizations are left out for reasons of space, as many of these are surveyed in the summary chapter on the methodological approaches employed throughout this book series.

1 The *terra incognita*: Nineteenth-Century Researches on the Balkans

For most of the nineteenth century, research in and on the Balkans was commissioned by institutions outside the region and outside academia and was closely linked with particular political or economic agendas. The geographical notions of the "Balkan peninsula" (or "the Balkans") and "Southeastern Europe" were themselves relatively late coinages of non-local origin. Their emergence was contemporaneous with the upsurge of "scientific geography," oriented towards naming regions according to "natural" geographic criteria. The dominant appellation until the 1870s was, however, a political one—Turkey-in-Europe or European Turkey—and was closely associated with the "Eastern Question." Austrian geologist Ami Boué's (1794–1881) renowned four-volume *La Turquie d'Europe* (1840), containing valuable information on the ethnography, toponymy, history, folklore, demographics, linguistics, and literature of the Balkan nations, helped standardize this appellation.

Linguists were the first to use the term "Southeastern Europe"/"European Southeast" for these lands.[1] In 1813, the Austro-Slovenian linguist Jernej (Bartholomäus) Kopitar (1780–1844) detected common elements in the Albanian, Bulgarian, and Romanic languages, locating them in "*südostliche Europa*."[2] Ami Boué, for his part, extended "*le sud-est de l'Europe*" to the north and west beyond the political frontiers of the Ottoman Empire into parts of

1 For the nineteenth-century history of this term, see in particular Alex Drace-Francis, "Zur Geschichte des Südosteuropakonzepts bis 1914," in *Europa und die Grenzen im Kopf* (*Wieser Enzyklopädie des europäischen Ostens, 11*) eds. K. Kaser, D. Gramshammer-Hohl, and R. Pichler (Klagenfurt: Wieser Verlag 2004), 277.

2 Victor Friedman, "Contact and Consciousness in the Balkan Sprachbund," in Victor A. Friedman, *Studies on Albanian and Other Balkan Languages* (Peja: Dukagjini 2003), 472.

the Habsburg realm.[3] Yet neither Boué nor the linguists, historians, or travelers who made reference to the "Southeastern (part of) Europe" tried to define the area thus named. On account of their pioneering cartographic work based on field observations, Boué and Johann Georg von Hahn (1811–1869), an Austrian diplomat, philologist, and Albanologist, should be considered the founders of geographic Balkan studies. They were followed by the Hungarian geographer, archaeologist, and ethnographer Fülöp Félix Kanitz (1829–1904), whose geographic, cartographic, historical, and ethnographic studies, though concerning mainly Serbia and northern Bulgaria, won him the title of "Columbus of the Balkans" in the German press.[4] The first professional Bulgarian historian, a graduate of the university in St. Petersburg, Spiridon Palauzov (1818–1872), wrote a book in 1858 titled *The European South-East in the Fourteenth Century* that dealt with the relations between Byzantium, the medieval states of Serbia and Bulgaria, and the invading hordes of the Ottoman Turks.[5]

For most of the nineteenth century, the studies of European Turkey/Southeastern Europe were overshadowed by the much more developed "Slavistics," which combined linguistics, literature, history, and ethnography. The scholarly tradition of Slavic studies, particularly in the German-speaking world and Russia, "for decades exerted a most powerful impact on the course of research into Southeastern Europe."[6] Its incentives were political and related, in the German case, to the Austrian expansionist ambitions in the area since the second half of the eighteenth century. During the nineteenth century this preoccupation grew in parallel with the rise of the "Eastern Question." Jernej Kopitar was the scholar who introduced German Slavistics to the Balkans on the wings of European Romanticism, followed by Franz Ritter von Miklosich (1813–1891), the first holder of the Chair of Slavic Philology at the University of Vienna (1849), and the Croatian Vatroslav Jagić (1838–1923), the creator of the "Archive for Slavic Philology" (1876). From a long-term perspective, in Austria,

3 Drace-Francis, "Zur Geschichte des Südosteuropakonzepts," 278–279.

4 It should be noted that for security reasons, the Ottoman authorities had previously kept foreign travelers away from strategically important areas. See Oliver Jens Schmitt, "Balkanforschung an der Universität Wien," in *Reichweiten und Außensichten. Die Universität Wien als Schnittstelle wissenschaftlicher Entwicklungen und gesellschaftlicher Umbrüche*, eds. Margarete Grandner and Thomas König (Vienna: Vienna University Press, 2015), 66.

5 Spiridon Palauzov, *Yugo Vostok Evropy v XIV stoletie* (St. Petersburg, 1858). In his book *The Reform and the Catholic Reaction in Hungary* (1860), Palauzov spoke of "the peoples of Southeastern Europe" who were striving for "their proper, distinct development" (127). Elsewhere he used the term "European Turkey."

6 Fritz Valjavec, "Der Werdegang der deutschen Südostforschung und ihr gegenwärtiger Stand. Zur Geschichte und Methodik," *Südost-Forschungen* 6 (1941): 9.

Slavic philology was arguably the one durable and continuous scholarly connection to the area. A chair dealing with Slavic history ("antiquity") was set up in 1893 under the Czech historian Konstantin Jireček (1854–1918). In this framework, history was made into an auxiliary science under the overarching discipline of Slavic philology.[7] The launching of the first course on Eastern European history at the University of Vienna in 1907, though initiated by renowned scholars like Jagić and Jireček, was also motivated by the political need to study the Monarchy's neighbors to the east and southeast.

The Russian academic connection to the region had similar incentives. In their Russian usage, the terms "European Turkey" and "the Balkans/Balkan peninsula" connoted a (geo)political and geographic area populated mainly by Slavs. Initial Russian interest in the Balkan world is associated with Catherine II's drive in this direction, but serious preoccupation with it dates to the reign of Alexander I, whose "Eastern" politics needed expert knowledge. In the absence of academic expertise, an ad hoc genre, "official Slavic studies," focusing on the Balkan Slavs and pursued by Russian military and diplomatic officials, emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century under the patronage of respective ministerial departments.[8] The institutionalization of Slavic studies (philology, ethnography, folklore, and arts) in Russia took place in the 1830s and reached fruition in the latter part of the century.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century also witnessed the institutionalization of the study of the Balkans/Southeastern Europe outside the region, which came along with the final phase of the Eastern Question (now also called "the Balkan Question"). In the constitution of Balkan studies as a distinct academic field, scholars from the Habsburg realm played the leading role. At the turn of the century, Vienna was the major European center for research in Balkan languages, ethnographic heritage, history, and culture. The occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1878 ushered in a new era of entwining science and politics, underpinned by what some analysts see as a particular Austro-Hungarian model of building nations in the Balkans, which

7 Thus Jireček's first works on Bulgarian and Serbo-Croatian history appeared in *Revue de linguistique et de philology comparée*, published in Paris: Petăr Mijatev, "Constantin Jireček, les Balkans et les Bulgares," *Bulletin d'AIESSE* 7, nos. 1–2 (Bucharest, 1969): 42.

8 Mikhail Belov, "'Sluzhebnoe' slavyanovedenie v Rossii v pervoy poloviny XIX veka," *Slavyanovedenie* 4 (2012): 53–68. Belov uses the term "official Slavic studies" ("служебное славяноведение," служебно-ведомственные исследования) to denote works that generally remained inaccessible to the public and in which officials took the role of experts. Much of this "expert work" was couched in unmistakably Orientalist lexicon, describing the Serbs as noble barbarians, unlike the Wallachians and the Gypsies, who were considered sheer barbarians.

in the case of the Bosnian Muslims and the Albanians succeeded.[9] In 1897 a "Commission for the Balkan Peninsula" at the Vienna Academy of Sciences was set up with two departments, historical-archaeological and philological. This was followed by the creation, in 1904, of a "Bosnian-Herzegovinian Institute for Balkan Research" in Sarajevo, led by the archaeologist Carl Patsch.[10] In the wake of the Balkan wars, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences set up a Balkan ("Eastern") Committee. Later, in the midst of World War I, it established the Hungarian Scientific Institute of Constantinople (1916–1919) with the primary objective of carrying out historical research.[11] On the whole, economic interest and trade opportunities were strong incentives towards perceiving the region as a unit rather than as a cluster of "country case studies," despite the varying assessment of the role of the individual Balkan states by the elites of the Dual Monarchy.

In Germany, the first institutions devoted to the investigation of the region emerged on the eve of and during World War I. The *Meyers großes Konversations-Lexikon* of 1908, which contained an entry under "Balkan" but recommended instead the name "Southeast European peninsula," explained the region's particular importance for European politics by its "intermediary location between Asia and Europe," which made it one of the most important transition zones for Levantine trade. The German interest in the region built, in fact, on a pre-existing notion of *Mitteleuropa*, formulated in the 1840s, where the vision of a strong Central Europe already included the Balkan peninsula as a German sphere of interest.[12] Friedrich List (1789–1846) was among the first to stress the potential for German expansion into these "unused, but naturally fertile" areas. "The entire South-East beyond Hungary," List asserted, "is our hinterland, the basis of a powerful German-Hungarian Eastern Empire, bordered on one side by the Black, and the other by the Adriatic Sea, animated

9 Schmitt, "Balkanforschung an der Universität Wien," 76.

10 Carl Patsch, "Bericht über deutsche und ausländische Südosteuropa-Forschung," *Leipziger Vierteljahrsschrift für Südosteuropa* 3 (1939): 248–249. The Institute functioned until 1918.

11 Zoltán Hajdú, "Hungarian Researches on the Southeast-European Space," in *Southeast-Europe: State Borders, Cross-Border Relations, Spatial Structures*, eds. Zoltán Hajdú, Iván Illés, and Zoltán Raffay (Pécs: Center for Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2007), 19–20. According to Hajdú, the period until the end of World War I "was in many respects the most exciting, most complex and most fruitful era of the Hungarian Balkan researches" (20).

12 See Henry C. Meyer, *Mitteleuropa in German Thought and Action 1815–1945* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), and *European Journal of Social Theory* 1, no. 2 (2008), special issue on *Mitteleuropa*.

by German and Hungarian spirit."[13] A number of periodicals, such as the monthly *Balkan-Revue*, pointedly subtitled *Monatsschrift für die wirtschaftlichen Interessen des südosteuropäischen Länder*, popped up in response to this kind of interest by promoting German economic penetration in the agrarian states of the area and their integration into the economy of the German Reich. But as in the Austrian case, scholarly engagements with the region in Germany were at different removes from the centers of power. The institutionalization of Byzantine studies in Munich in 1892 and its development into an autonomous and rigorous modern scholarly discipline exerted a wide methodological and cultural-historical impact that far exceeded the area of Byzantine scholarship. Not only did its systematic and inclusive conception encompass the whole Balkan peninsula (including the Romanian Principalities), but it approached the research field of Southeastern Europe "from the other side," from the point of view of Constantinople, for which the Southeast was the northwest. This was a significant shift of perspective in itself, which was also capable of counterbalancing the likely "one-sidedness" of the Central European viewpoint.[14]

Along with Vienna, the central role of Leipzig should be noted in promoting comparative Balkan linguistics, folklore, and ethnography around the turn of the century. The Indo-Europeanist and Slavist August Leskien (1840–1916) made a name for himself in modern comparative linguistics focused on Baltic and Slavic languages. He was also the author of *Fairytales from Albania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Croatia* (1925), where he introduced the idea of crisscrossing Balkan (poetic) cultures. Another key figure in Balkan studies in Leipzig was the linguist Gustav Weigand (1860–1930), who founded the Institute for Romanian Language (1893), later transformed into the Institute for Balkan Languages (converted after World War I into an Eastern European and Islamic Institute and finally, in 1923, into an Eastern European Institute). At its center was comparative Balkan linguistics and folklore. In his *Ethnographie von Makedonien* (1924), Weigand highlighted and searched for the sources of the enormous ethnic and linguistic diversity of Macedonia, the cultural/historical context of the coexistence of so many ethnic groups, and the similarities and differences in their languages, customs, and psychology, as well as their divergent national-political agendas. This study became a blueprint for Balkan ethnography and, at the same time, a key reference in the Bulgarian national narrative of Macedonia. Almost all Bulgarian philologists and ethnographers in the period preceding World War I were students of Leskien or Weigand, whereas almost all prominent Serbian historians before and after the war were trained at the

13 Cited in Drace-Francis, "The Prehistory of a Neologism," 122.

14 Valjavec, "Der Werdegang der deutschen Südostforschung," 11–12.

University of Vienna. In 1891, the Viennese alumnus Ioan Bogdan (1864–1919) opened the first chair in Slavic studies at the University of Bucharest, followed by a second one in Iaşi (under Bogdan's disciple Ilie Bărbulescu), in 1905. The first course on regional history in Romania, titled "The Place of Romanians in Southeast European History," was offered at the University of Czernowitz in 1911 by another graduate of the University of Vienna, the historian Ion Nistor (1876–1962).

The French academic approach to *les Balkans* was shaped mainly by fears of the "pan-German" economic and political thrust in the area. This explains the French preoccupation with the South Slavs, who were portrayed as the moral, political, and racial opposite—and the strategic counterforce—to the Germans. French studies of the Balkans were consigned to the Collège de France's Department of Slavic Studies (founded in 1840) and the School of Eastern Languages (*Ecole des langues orientales vivantes*). By the 1870s, Cyprien Robert (1807–1865), who preferred to speak of a "Greco-Slavic world" extending from the Carinthian Alps to the Urals, and Louis Léger (1843–1923) had laid the basis for the research on the South Slavs. Yet in France this subfield lagged considerably behind the level of, and was even more politicized than, research in Germany and Austria-Hungary.[15] As a whole, French and British academic attention to the region other than that provoked by the German expansion, Ottoman decay, and political crises remained scant. And without exception, it was steeped in the burning political and military themes of the period—the Macedonian Question, the Young Turk Revolution, the annexation of Bosnia—and the respective foreign policy contingencies, which often blurred the boundaries between scholarly analysis and political propaganda.

The Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople (1894–1914) had a similar assignment. A typical Orientalist enterprise, it was intended to support, in the words of the prominent Russian Byzantinist Fyodor Uspenski, "Russia's part in the Eastern Question [which] was bequeathed to her by history" and to participate actively "in the settlement of matters connected with the Byzantine heritage."[16] On the whole, however, Russian academic interest in the region, much like the French, was limited to the Balkan Slavs, while political plans

15 Cyprien Robert, *Les Slaves de Turquie. Les Serbes, Monténégrins, Bosniaques, Albanais et Bulgares* (Paris, 1844); Cyprien Robert, *Le Monde Gréco-Slave* (1842–1844); Louis Léger, *Les Slaves du Sud et leur civilization* (Paris, 1869); Louis Léger, *Le monde slave. Études politiques et littéraires* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1897); Louis Léger, *Serbes, Croates et Bulgares. Etudes historiques, politiques et littéraires* (Paris, 1913).

16 Fyodor I. Uspenski, *Istoriya Vizantiiskoy Imperii* (St. Petersburg, 1914), vol. 1, xii. See also Konstantínos Papoulídis, *The Russian Archaeological Institute of Constantinople: 1894–1914* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1987).

centering on Constantinople, such as that envisaged by Nikolai Danilevski, put forward the idea of an all-Slavic, not a Balkan, union.

2 Institutionalizing an Academic Field

The radicalization of national discourses around the turn of the twentieth century was accompanied by the rise of comparatist methodologies and the construction, for the first time, of a sort of Southeast European (Balkan) unit of analysis. It was driven by political contingencies—the ultimate dismantling of "Turkey in Europe," which ushered in the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (1908) and the two Balkan wars—and a search for a larger integrative cultural or civilizational space. The first regionalist scholarly schemes originated with practitioners of several closely related human sciences—particularly linguists, literary scholars, and ethnographers—while historiography, to the extent that it ventured beyond national frameworks prior to the Great War, largely followed the methods of these other disciplines. Before the war, local academic studies on southeastern Europe mostly gravitated toward cultural studies in a broader sense. The Balkan linguistic community and folklore/ethnography were the first, and for quite some time the only, areas in which the idea of a Balkan historical commonality was seriously deliberated.

Linguistics was among the first human sciences to assume a strongly comparative direction, which ushered in studies into linguistic commonality and intercommunication. The "Balkan linguistic area" (or "linguistic league," *Sprachbund*) was one of its prominent outcomes, as it proved to be "the first area of contact-induced language change to be identified as such" and *the* model prototype for language interaction and convergence.[17] It has been said that "The Balkan peninsula is the world's most famous linguistic area, and the one that has received the most attention from scholars over the longest period of time."[18] In fact, linguists were the first to use the term "Balkanism" to indicate, contrary

17 Victor Friedman, "Balkanizing the Balkan Sprachbund: A Closer Look at Grammatical Permeability and Feature Distribution," in *Grammars in Contact: A Cross Linguistic Typology*, eds. Alexandra J. Aikhenvald and R.M.W. Dixon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 201. "In modern terms, a sprachbund is understood as two or more geographically contiguous and genealogically different languages sharing grammatical and lexical developments that result from language contact rather than a common ancestral source": Victor Friedman, "Balkans as a Linguistic Area," in Keith Brown, ed., *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Elsevier, 2006), 657.

18 Sarah G. Thomason, "Linguistic Areas and Language History," in *Languages in Contact* (Studies in Slavic and General Linguistics 28), eds. Dicky Gilbers et al. (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 2000), 317.

to the present-day re-signification of the term, the opposite of fragmentation: a lexical and, more importantly, grammatical "feature shared among the unrelated or only distantly related languages of the Balkans"—Balkan Slavic, Balkan Romance, Albanian, Greek, and Balkan Turkish dialects, which linguists attributed to either a common historical substratum or communal multilingualism and contact-induced change. Linguistic "Balkanization," that is, the creation of a relatively unified linguistic area through centuries of multilingual contact, is thus the very opposite of political "Balkanization."[19] Such similarities among the Balkan languages were first observed by Jernej Kopitar and Franz Miklosich. Kopitar's characterization of Balkan Romance, Balkan Slavic, and Albanian as three lexically distinct but grammatically identical languages ("*nur eine Sprachform . . . mit dreierlei Sprachmaterie*")—which he attributed to the influence of a Thraco-Illyrian substratum—is taken as the earliest indication of the Balkan linguistic community.[20] Miklosich's studies on the relationships and "borrowings" between the Balkan languages raised philology to a leading discipline in the preoccupation with the Balkans. The Russian linguist Nikolay S. Trubetskoy (1890–1938), who is credited with the original formulation of the concept of "linguistic union," argued that the "theory [of a common linguistic substratum] is not sufficient to explain the coincidences between languages of different genealogical families," thus stressing the importance of language interaction and contact-induced change.[21] Linguistic permeation of this kind increasingly came to be interpreted as testimony to "centuries of multilingualism and interethnic contact at the most intimate levels."[22]

Quite self-confidently, then, linguists—who brought up the issue of intra-Balkan convergences as early as the nineteenth century, theoretically elaborated on the notion of a "linguistic area" at the beginning of the twentieth century, and since the 1950s have rigorously substantiated the concept of "Balkan linguistic union"—have come up with a special claim regarding the

19 See Jouko Lindstedt, "Linguistic Balkanization: Contact-Induced Change by Mutual Reinforcement," in *Languages in Contact*, eds. Gilbers et al., 231–246. For the negative interpretation of "Balkanism" and "Balkanization," see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

20 Jernej K. Kopitar, "Albanische, walachische und bulgarische Sprache," *Jahrbücher der Literatur* (Vienna) 46 (1829): 106.

21 Trubetskoy first formulated his thesis in 1923 (in his article "Vavilonskaya basnya i smesenie yazykov," *Evrazijskij vremennik* 3: 107–124) and introduced the term *Sprachbund* at the First International Congress of Linguists in Leiden, the Netherlands, in 1928.

22 Victor Friedman, "The Place of Balkan Linguistics in Understanding Balkan History and Balkan Modernity," *Bulletin de l'Association des études du sud-est européen* 24–25 (1994–1995): 89; Schmitt, "Balkanforschung an der Universität Wien," 65–66.

interpretation of the region's history and culture. Not only have language interaction and linguistic change been seen as able to "contribute to the elucidation of historical problems," but it has also been argued that "a new understanding of Balkan linguistics becomes crucial in promoting a balanced view of the present and past, and also of the future [of the region]." This balanced view must draw on the recognition of the "deep ties that bind together all of the Balkan languages and the people that speak them, while at the same accepting the historical developments that have led to the differentiation of languages and identities."[23]

Even if most of it originated and took place outside the region, the debate on the Balkan linguistic area set the model of a scholarly discourse extolling Balkan commonalities and stirred other academic fields to turn their attention to phenomena like contact, interaction, and convergence. The linguistic approach supplied Balkan studies with a paradigm and a vision.

Comparative folkloristics and ethnography often went hand in hand with comparative linguistics. At the turn of the century, a generation of Balkan scholars came of professional age who, in the spirit of the critical positivist method, subverted the romantic notion of national uniqueness and exceptionality that precluded the quest for resemblances in the development of nations. For the Bulgarian ethnographer and literary scholar Ivan D. Shishmanov (1862–1928), "transfers" and "entanglements" riveted the very fabric of a people's wisdom. In some of his most authoritative comparative studies, he sought to exemplify this process by meticulously tracing the itinerary of popular folkloric themes and their local variants. The resulting cultural-historical geography cut across the geographical boundaries of the region, the administrative boundaries of empires, and the cultural boundaries of religion.[24] Such ethnographic interaction and transfers did not translate into relatively unified cultural space. Shishmanov's implicit understanding of the region appears to have been one of a fluctuating space of cultural osmosis based on longstanding coexistence, communication, and percolation.

Significantly, the agencies and the driving force behind this (regional or global) process were the national cultures: while conceding that national isolation did not exist and that each culture evolved in a process of continuous exchange with other cultures, Shishmanov's "comparatism" pursued above all the identification of the "foreign elements" and "borrowings" in the national makeup. Folkloric studies, furthermore, were said to be "almost the sole instrument for defining the ethnographic boundaries of the various

23 Friedman, "The Place of Balkan Linguistics," 88, 90.

24 Ivan Shishmanov, *Izbrani suchinenia*, vol. 2 (Sofia: Izdatelstvo na BAN, 1966), 62–215.

Balkan peoples."[25] Bogdan Hasdeu (1838–1907), a leading Romanian philologist and historian at the turn of the century, upheld similar views when arguing for his "theory of words' circulation."[26] Drawing on his investigations of medieval history and literature, the aforementioned Romanian philologist and historian Ioan Bogdan agreed with Shishmanov that the Romanians, much like the Bulgarians, could not gain a proper understanding of their national history unless they conceived of their culture in its connectedness with other national cultures in the region. But he, too, saw it as the duty of cultural history to examine the nation from an ethnographic and statistical point of view in order "to account for the constitutive elements of our nationality and to understand its nature and inclinations."[27] Likewise, the Bulgarian literary historian Boyan Penev (1882–1927) deemed it "unthinkable to study any literature in isolation." Yet he also held that the ultimate purpose of the "historical-comparative method" and of investigating interactions and borrowings was to reveal "the essential peculiarities in the spirit" of a national literature and "to distinguish the authentic [*samobitnite*] from the external elements [in the borrowing literature]."[28] All these cases clearly show a close connection between comparatism and the national framework of analysis. Positivist methodology did challenge the romantic national discourse and disclose the benefits of comparison, but it also enhanced the nation-framed narrative and fostered the "nationalization" of sciences with the help of its critical toolkit.

Shishmanov was explicit about the political implications of ethnographic and literary studies, especially in a region historically as war-torn as the Balkans: The political problems "from which all Balkan states chronically suffer" could not be solved "on the grounds of the historical past alone"; it befell to ethnography to perform this cardinal task. Quoting Stojan Novaković (1842–1915)—an outstanding Serbian historian, philologist, and politician with whom Bulgarian scholars in various fields would soon clash over the issue of the Macedonian Slavs' "national consciousness"—Shishmanov upheld the view

25 Shishmanov, *Izbrani suchinenia*, vol. 2, 30–31. As a "systematic inquiry" of folklore, ethnography according to Shishmanov implied the involvement of "literary history, on the one hand, and ethnology and popular psychology, on the other, that is of the natural and the cultural history of a people" (ibid., 23–24).

26 For useful summaries of Hasdeu's ideas, see Adrian Fochi, *Recherches comparées de folklore sud-est européen*, (Bucharest: AIESEE, 1972), 20–33; Alexandru Rosetti, *La linguistique balcanique* (Bucharest: Univers, 1985), 16–22.

27 Ioan Bogdan, *Istoriografia română și problemele ei actuale* (Bucharest: n.p., 1905), 20.

28 Boyan Penev, "Posoki i tseli pri prouchvaneto na novata ni literature," in Penev, *Literatura i inteligentsiya* (Sofia: Zahariy Stoyanov, 2003) (originally published 1910), 19–24.

that in his day the "ethnographic definition" could be accurate only if pursued "without any reference to the past, with a grammar and a dialectology in hand."[29]

In hindsight, this sounds ironic, of course—if anything, ethnographic charts used to foment rather than allay scholarly strife and nationalist rancor. But it is indicative of the convictions of liberally-minded scholars like Shishmanov that academia could lay the foundations for a better international order and that "historical ethnography," the other name for cultural history at that time, should be invoked against the state politics of their age.

> Whatever is being said, we [the Balkan peoples] are still children of a single culture and far more mature for a fraternal alliance than many other peoples who, like us, dream of unification. Our hatred is more the result of artificial agitation that once may have had a point, but which now is simply criminal. . . . A few congresses of the scholars of the Balkans [*des savants balkaniques*] . . . would do more for our mutual understanding than all the diplomatic actions.[30]

The pre-eminence of linguistic and folkloric comparatism at the foundational moment of Balkan studies had some immediate and some long-term consequences. The most durable one was the association of "Balkanistics," as an area subfield, primarily or solely with ethnology and linguistics—a narrow reading that has survived to this day. At the time, however, it led in two opposite directions. On the one hand, the commonalities on the level of grammar, syntax, belief, and popular lore seemed to imply an underlying primeval unity in the way of thinking, mentality, and the unconscious. This trend evolved contemporaneously with the upsurge of the psychological discourses first in Germany and then in France. But since the latter were dominated by the disciplines of *Völkerpsychologie*, or comparative folk psychology, and national characterology, the result was usually to reinforce rather than subvert and relativize national fragmentation. This, in turn, presupposed an effort at characterological definition on a comparative scale. With this background, it is not surprising that preoccupation with ethnopsychology and its comparatist methodology came to unite the three otherwise rather different "Balkanists" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century—Shishmanov, Cvijić, and Iorga.

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29 Shishmanov, *Izbrani suchinenia*, vol. 2, 30–31.

30 Ivan Shishmanov, "Retsenzii i knigopis," *Bălgarski pregled* 2 (1894–1895): 103; Ivan Shishmanov, *Bălgaro-rumănski nauchni i kulturni vrăzki 1869–1944. Dokumenti*, compiled by T. Ganev (Sofia: Izdatelstvo na BAN, 1973), 220–221.

The promoters of Balkan studies between the two world wars used to count Jovan Cvijić (1865–1927), "the founder of Balkan geology, geography, and anthropogeography," among the founding fathers of the discipline.[31] The reasons seem to lie in the methodological rigor rather than the geographic inclusiveness of his investigations.[32] Cvijić's approach was robustly taxonomic. His anthropogeographic cartography of the Balkan peninsula revolved around numerous classifications concerning geographic regions, geomorphological and physical features, civilizational (or cultural) zones, types of settlement, and psychic types. It thus implied a vision of great structural and cultural diversity over time and space effected by various causes—geographical, historical (political), social, and ethnic. It featured four cultural zones: Modified Byzantine (Old Balkan) civilization—"Balkanism in the true sense of the word"; a zone of Turkish and Eastern ("Turco-Oriental") influences; a zone of Western and Central European culture; and a patriarchal cultural zone. Cvijić saw the historical development of the Balkan peoples as being marked by discontinuities and assimilations between different clusters of cultures. "The lack of continuity of the civilizational influences is a characteristic of the Balkan Peninsula, a condition the reverse of that which obtained in Western and Central Europe."[33] What Cvijić describes is thus a palimpsest of considerably modified, partly overlapping, and largely circumscribed civilizational zones.

Virtually coinciding with these zones of civilization were Cvijić's psychological types: Dinaric, Central, Eastern Balkan (Bulgarian), and Pannonian. The notion of a "Balkan mentality," both as a generalized regional category and as an ethnic category, has long been duly criticized. Its local diffusion has been attributed to dubious academic fashions external to the region that

31 The results of Cvijić's immense work on the human geography of the Balkans and his conceptions in this domain were summarized in his famed *La péninsule balkanique: géographie humaine*, first published in French (Paris: Libraire Armand Colin, 1918) and translated into Serbian as *Balkansko poluostrvo i južnoslovenske zemlje. Osnovi antropogeografije*, vol. 1 (1922), vol. 2 (1931). *La péninsule balkanique* is celebrated by the "geographical craft" as "one of the great regional geographies of its time": Thomas W. Freeman, *The Geographer's Craft* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1967), 192. Cvijić's research had a profound impact on geographical and ethnographic thought and practice, in and beyond the Balkans.

32 While Cvijić's geomorphological observations encompassed the whole Balkan peninsula, his psychological investigations concerned only the South Slavs. The Romanian lands and the Romanians, as well as the Turks, Greeks, Albanians, and Vlachs, were not part of his ethnopsychological map of the Balkans.

33 Jovan Cvijić, "The Zones of Civilization of the Balkan Peninsula," *Geographical Review* 5, no. 6 (1918): 481; Jovan Cvijić, *Balkansko poluostrvo*, vol. 1 (Belgrade: Državna štamparija, 1922), 87–88.

tended to portray the Balkan cultures as a sanctuary of patriarchal practices and lifestyles long extinct elsewhere in Europe. As a matter of fact, however, it was Cvijić who had for the first time implemented this "scientific" approach to the Balkans. Scholars as important as Gerhard Gesemann (1888–1948), perhaps the most powerful voice among the interwar German "folk psychologists" of the Balkan Slavs, might have gone a step further in supplying Cvijić's psychological and folkloric interpretations with racial underpinnings. But neither the discipline of Balkan folk psychology nor the genre of "heroic lifestyle" as the epitome of true Balkanness and *homo balkanicus* were his inventions. In fact, Cvijić's scholarly reputation itself appears to have lent respectability both to the "regional relevance" of the discipline and to the conclusions of regionalists as dissimilar and, in their own way, salient as Gesemann and Fernand Braudel, both of whom drew heavily on his ethnopsychological typology.[34]

Cvijić's conceptualization of the Balkans brought to the fore and served as a scholarly underpinning of the region's inherent multidimensional diversity, which thus became part of the region's specifics. What typically had been seen as an "ethnological museum"[35] Cvijić reformulated into a much more complex structure of geographic, historical, cultural, social, and economic intraregional variations whose combination, somewhat paradoxically, turned into "unifying structural characteristics" of the region. He seems to have been interested not in identifying an overarching commonality but instead in highlighting the internal diversity, complexity, and heterogeneity of the region.[36] This vision of the region would thereafter evolve in parallel to the one stressing fundamental convergence and similarity.

At the same time, there were forces that operated in the opposite direction, continuously and effectively subverting the centrifugal tendencies. Mobility or migrations—or what Cvijić called metanastasic movements—stood out as a powerful vehicle of intraregional "penetration and connection." They

34 See in particular Gerhard Gesemann, *Heroische Lebensform: Zur Literatur und Wesenskunde der balkanischen Patriarchalität* (Berlin: Wiking-Verlag, 1943); Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 776–780.

35 To an external observer, an American historian wrote in 1914, the Balkans appeared "unorganized, disconnected and a mechanical mixture of unrelated parts," whose multitude of tongues, dialects, and religions made him feel like a visitor in an "ethnological museum": William M. Sloane, *The Balkans, a Laboratory of History* (New York, 1914), 3, 83, 125.

36 Some later critics went so far as to accuse Cvijić of deliberately stressing the geomorphological and geophysical diversity of the Balkans in order to create a geographical justification for the existing nation-states and undermine the idea of Balkan unity: Vladimir Ćorović, *Borba za nezavisnost Balkana* (Belgrade: Izdanje Balkanskog instituta, 1937), 9–11.

allowed the expansion of certain civilizational zones or, respectively, (ethno)-psychological types, across major portions of the peninsula, thus overpowering the weight and the effects of cultural fragmentation. Hardly surprisingly, the Serbs stood out as the most populous and dynamic force behind these movements—the vibrant Balkan metanastasic population par excellence.[37] Around this Serbian (later Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian) core, the region's internal "center" was supposed to emerge with the potential to neutralize, even reverse, the centrifugal tendencies resulting from its diversity. The arguments for that were geopolitical and ethnopsychological. By virtue of the geomorphological and geophysical conditions in the region, Serbia (after 1913) was fated, first, to become a gravitational political center for the South Slavs in Central as well as Balkan Europe, and second, to play a geopolitical role of utmost importance for Western Europe, namely, blocking the German expansion east and southwards.[38] The ethnopsychological arguments promoted the Serbs as the natural, instinctive state-builders and unifiers of most of the Balkan peninsula.[39] While Cvijić had done a great deal in substantiating with academic authority the nodal geopolitical and strategic position of the Balkan peninsula across history, it was the unique place of the Serbs and Serbia within this geopolitical area that steered his whole argument.

Unlike Shishmanov and Iorga, Cvijić was not directly involved in politics. But with his scholarly approach and reputation, he was in a position to lend invaluable support to Serbia's national and political claims.[40] Cvijić's expertise, furthermore, was deemed indispensable in harmonizing any political rearrangement in the region with its distinct geographic (and geomorphological)

37 "The above survey indicates that metanastasic movements were of a different kind and more intensive among the South Slavs of the western and central regions than among the Bulgarians. Among the former the Serbs had embarked on much more significant metanastasic movements than the Croats and the Slovenes" (Cvijić, "The Zones of Civilization," 111–112).

38 Cvijić, "The Zones of Civilization," 111–112; Snezhana Dimitrova, "Jovan Cvijić za periferiyata i tsentăra," *Balkanistichen forum* 3, no. 1 (1994): 5–16.

39 See Marko Živković, "Violent Highlanders and Peaceful Lowlanders: Uses and Abuses of Ethno-Geography in the Balkans from Versailles to Dayton," in "Ambiguous Identities in the New Europe," special issue, *Replika* (1997).

40 Between 1915 and 1919 he published nine books in French and English, most of them with the support of the Serbian government, which provided scholarly legitimacy to the territorial claims of the planned Yugoslav state. At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, he was one of six senior experts heading the Ethnographic and Historical Section, and as such was closely involved in both the formal creation of Yugoslavia and the postwar territorial settlement in Southeastern Europe.

and ethnographic characteristics. H.W.V. Temperley's assessment, in his four-volume *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, of the political weight of Cvijić's scholarly status is thus barely exaggerated and must have been shared by many:

> the memorandum of the claims of the Serb-Croat-Slovene state . . . was . . . like the rest, based upon considerations partly ethnic, partly historic and partly strategic and economic. But it differed from almost all the others, as, for example, the Italian, the Greek and the Romanian, in that the ethnic argument was the strongest and most permanent element on which the Yugoslavs could rely . . . [it] bore obvious traces of the hand of M. Cvijić, the most learned and enlightened not only of Serbian, but of all Balkan geographic experts.[41]

Few ever noted the inconsistency between Cvijić's scholarly and political arguments, as a reviewer of *The Balkan Peninsula* did when asking: "Where racial purity does not exist, where stable nationality has not developed . . . what assistance can the geographer give here to the statesman and politician?"[42] The academic reputation that Cvijić enjoyed was decisive for the effectiveness of his political agenda. As a peer geographer remarked, "his propaganda for Yugoslavia was so effective because it never appeared to be propaganda at all."[43]

Nicolae Iorga (1871–1940), the most prominent Romanian historian of the early twentieth century, went much further than Shishmanov and Cvijić in envisioning a sort of Balkan commonality, historicity, and culture. As early as the 1913 World Historical Congress in London, Iorga called for history-writing beyond the national framework,[44] although he himself at that point was also busy creating a new Romanian "ethno-democratic" nationalist narrative both in politics and history. The commonalities of experience and the "fatalities of geography," Iorga declared, demanded the study of national history on a broader basis that would view the various common Balkan traditions as one

41 H.W.V. Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. 4 (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton, 1921), 207.

42 M.I. Newbegin, "The Human Geography of the Balkans," *Geographical Journal* 53, no. 2 (1919): 113.

43 Freeman, *The Geographer's Craft*, 84.

44 Nicolae Iorga, *I. Les bases nécessaires d'une nouvelle histoire du moyen-age. II. La survivance byzantine dans les pays roumains. Deux communications faites le 7 et 8 avril 1913 au troisième Congrès international l'études historiques à Londres* (Vălenii-de-Munte, 1913).

whole.[45] He did not hesitate to openly challenge all those for whom "each nationality appears as individuality clearly separated from the others" and to counter "the prejudice that there is too little common ground between the nations in this region of Europe."[46]

Soon after the war between the former Balkan allies against the Ottoman Empire, Iorga founded the Institute of Southeast European Studies in Bucharest (1913–1948) and a specialized journal, the *Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'Etude de l'Europe sud-orientale*. He referred to "Southeastern Europe," not to "the Balkans" or "the Balkan peninsula," terms he found "inaccurate [and] unjustified; there exists no element on which it can lean." The region thus named, in Iorga's reading, encompassed the integral space of "Eastern Romanity"—the "Carpatho-Balkanic" or "Carpatho-Danubian" realm incorporating the Romanians with the once-Romanized inhabitants (the Vlachs) to the south of the Danube, i.e., in "the Balkans" proper. This was the semantics underlying, what he called, "our people's Balkanism."[47] Characteristic of all of Southeast Europe was a "synthesis of a completely particular character" that furnished the "base of its common elements." The primary, "prehistoric" element of this synthesis was the Thracians, who were "at the origin of everything in the European Southeast."[48] The second element was the Roman "order," continued by a "neo-Roman" order—Byzantium. The Ottoman Turks carried on this tradition: "the conquerors . . . became the continuators of the Byzantine Empire."[49] The peace, local autonomy, and opportunities for the small nations ensured by these two empires made possible the endurance of that "unity in diversity" that came to distinguish the region.[50]

Iorga for the first time postulated the existence of a "fundamental unity resting on archaic traditions," a "particular [culture] common to the whole European Southeast," a shared racial nexus, and a distinctive historical, ethnographic, and civilizational "synthesis" between all those peoples: "The whole

45 Nicolae Iorga, "Eléments de communauté entre les peuples du Sud-Est Européen," *Revue Historique du Sud-est européen* 12, nos. 4–6 (1935); Nicolae Iorga, *Ce este Sud-Estul european* (Bucharest: Datina Românească, 1940).

46 Cited in Virgil Cândea, "Nicolas Iorga, historien de l'Europe du Sud-Est," in *Nicolas Iorga l'homme et l'oeuvre*, ed. D.M. Pippidi (Bucharest: Edition de l'Academie de la Rep. Soc. de Roumanie, 1972), 189.

47 Nicolae Iorga, *Generalităţi cu privire la studiile istorice*, 4th ed. (Iaşi: Polirom, 1999), 122–125, 135–137.

48 Iorga, "Eléments de communauté," 110, 115; Nicolae Iorga, *Le caractère commun des institutions du Sud-Est de l'Europe* (Paris: Librairie universitaire J. Gamber, 1929).

49 Iorga, "Eléments de communauté," 121–123.

50 Iorga, *Generalităţi*, 71–88.

European Southeast forms, in a certain sense, the same country, is the same territory, with the same memories—an integral world. . . . Everything connects us *without* our will."[51] Rather than constituting the sum total of ethnic essences marked by external borrowings (Shishmanov) or migrations (Cvijić)—in other words, rather than being "nationalized"—the Balkan nations came to be "Balkanized" by being endowed with a common heritage distinguished by specific historical evolution, life forms, and culture. To Iorga, regional history revealed a number of similarities strikingly reminiscent of Balkan linguistic unity, and the polymorphism of the region gave way to a deeper common factor: the institutions.[52]

At the same time, it was precisely this broader regional canvas that, in Iorga's reading, provided the context in which Romania's pivotal place in the region and the Romanians' historical mission in world history could stand out. The *historical* notion of Southeastern Europe buttressed the unity of the Romanians from Transylvania to the north to Macedonia and Greece to the south. Iorga's stress on the common Roman and Byzantine regional legacy complemented the ethnographic and linguistic arguments of scholars like Ovidu Densusianu, who sought to prove the Romanians' genetic ties to the Vlachs. Combining these two sets of arguments, Iorga's interpretation of Southeastern Europe attempted to counterbalance the thesis of the formative Slavic impact in the linguistic, social, and political history of Romanians, as demonstrated by Ioan Bogdan and others, by presuming a reciprocal "Romanian-Vlach" infiltration of the Greeks and the Slavs. Vasile Pârvan (1882–1927), a Romanian archaeologist and co-founder of the Institute for the Study of Southeastern Europe, summed up the actual stakes behind this "supranationalism": "The history of the Romanians," he wrote in 1925, "is in fact the history of the entire Carpatho-Danubian region and Southeastern Europe, not only in the Roman and Byzantine era but also in the late Middle Ages or in the modern era."[53] Iorga's regional narrative, therefore, was meant to create a justification for the national expansion of the Romanian state, not only in Transylvania and Bukovina but also south of the Danube.

This regional narrative had strong symbolic implications as well, as it sought to bridge the Lamprechtian project of "world history," which Iorga endorsed, and Romanian history. The region in this configuration came to stand as a mediating zone and a condition for global integration. The *cultural* notion

51 Iorga, *Ce este Sud-Estul european*, 12, 14 (italics original).

52 Iorga, *Le caractère commun des institutions*, 7–14 passim.

53 Cornelia Belcini-Pleşca, "South-East Europe in Vasile Pârvan's Work," *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 21, no. 3 (1983): 221.

of Southeastern Europe as designed by Iorga underscored the Romanians' place as the real transmitters of the Byzantine tradition after Byzantium had ceased to exist politically. Iorga's concept of *Byzance après Byzance* (1935) brilliantly exemplifies this synthesis of universal and national history through the mediation of regional history as well as the belief in "the universal vocation of Southeastern Europe and the role of the Romanians in the fulfillment of this vocation."[54] On the one hand, it stressed that the peoples of Southeast Europe belonged to a universal civilization that bridged East and West yet belonged to neither, possessing a unique ecumenical role and offering a unique contribution to world history. On the other hand, it elaborated on the idea of Byzantium's spiritual and institutional continuity through the Romanians—an idea also expressed in Iorga's monumental *La place des Roumains dans l'histoire universelle* (3 vols., 1935–1936) as well as in his *History of the Balkan States in the Modern Age* (1913).

This epistemological approach underwrote and reinforced a geopolitical one: regional solidarity was more than necessary at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was imminent and the dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire widely anticipated. Regional solidarity was again essential in the 1930s in the face of rising international insecurity and a mounting sense of small-state defenselessness. Both Shishmanov's and Iorga's initiatives with respect to Southeastern Europe indicated the need for a broader horizon and of synthesis on the dual level of geopolitics and ethnography or historiography.

It is noteworthy that both Cvijić and Iorga enjoyed high international visibility and academic reputations in their respective fields, especially in France, where they taught on a regular basis for many years. Cvijić's writings strongly impacted several generations of French geographers, who often demonstrated reverence for his authority. Iorga's historical erudition and immense productivity ensured him a privileged hearing at the most prestigious academic venues in Europe. Both of these men present notable cases of periphery-core intellectual transfer.

On the whole, regional history, which after World War II became a focal point of Southeast European studies, was a latecomer to the comparative method. As a rule, the tendency to treat the Southeast European states *en bloc* had no scholarly incentives but rather (geo-)political and economic ones. The emergence of a supra-national regional framework as a distinct field of study

54 Virgil Cândea, "Introduction," in Nicolae Iorga, *Byzantium after Byzantium*, trans. L. Treptow (Iaşi, Oxford, and Portland: Centre for Romanian Studies, 2000) (originally published as *Byzance après Byzance. Continuation de l'histoire de la vie byzantine*, 1935), 8.

at the turn of the century was the result of political pressure originating from outside and inside the region, as well as the general drive towards comparatism as an indispensable method and synthesis as the target of research. The modes in which the historical unity of the region was conceptualized were strongly influenced by the preeminence of linguistic and folkloristic comparatism, which pursued above all the identification of "foreign elements" and borrowings in the national make-up. The organizing agency and the key reference thereof was the nation. Thus the operations of entangling and disentangling historical experience alternated or proceeded in parallel, and there was little sign of an awareness of tension.

3 The Discourses of Interwar Balkanology

The period between the two world wars saw a peak in supranational plans focused on the Balkans and Southeastern Europe, both inside and outside the region. Interesting parallels and clashes of regional mappings ensued. A new (and considerably enlarged) notion of Southeastern Europe became not only a favored regional framework in German geopolitical and economic scheming but also an increasingly frequent reference in the British and French vocabulary. At the same time, the popular discourse of Balkanism, with its wholly negative connotations, continued to inform Western understandings and dominate in journalism, travelogues, and political literature.

Against this backdrop, it is striking to witness the systematic efforts at rehabilitating and the veritable renaissance in the local regional context of the "Balkans" during the interwar years. This revaluation was central to and underlay several parallel international and supranational undertakings: the communist project for Balkan federation, the liberal project for a Balkan Union, and the new "science of Balkanology." It was animated by various artistic and intellectual currents, including the avant-gardist movements of the 1920s and the various autochthonist, anti-liberal visions of the 1930s. Here I will focus only on the scholarly aspects of this phenomenon, leaving its political and artistic manifestations for a longer treatment in the future.

As in the previous period, the interwar upsurge and institutionalization of Southeast European studies were prompted by political circumstances. In the wake of the Balkan Pact of 1934, a series of academic institutions and publications emerged that framed their scope in explicitly regional terms. The Balkan Institute (*Balkanski Institut*) was founded in Belgrade in 1934 under the auspices of the king of Yugoslavia with the aim "on the one hand, to assist the mutual understanding and rapprochement of the Balkan peoples and, on

the other hand, to provide the non-Balkan world with an accurate and objective picture of Balkan realities and values."[55] A Balkan Near Eastern Institute, inaugurated in Sofia in 1920, offered advanced courses in Balkan languages, international law, and the modern history of the Balkan peoples. Regionally oriented research in Bucharest after the establishment of the first Institute of Southeast European Studies in 1913 also proceeded at the Institute of Byzantine Studies and the Institute of Balkan Studies and Research (*Institutul de Studii şi Cercetări Balcanice*), founded in 1937 and directed by the medievalist Victor Papacostea (1900–1962). The institutionalization of Balkan studies also meant the emergence of a series of international academic publications, such as the Romanian *Revue historique de sud-est européen* (23 vols., 1924–1946, a successor of the *Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'étude de l'Europe sud-orientale*), and *Balcania* (8 vols., 1938–1945), as well as the ambitious Yugoslav journal *Revue internationale des études balkaniques* (*RIEB*; 6 vols., 1935–1938), which aspired to become the main forum for scholars of the Balkans from and beyond the region.

The late 1930s and early 1940s was the time when the new "science of Balkanology" took shape, which aimed at elucidating "the elements of Balkan interdependence and unity" (Papacostea), while "drawing upon the comparative method of the nineteenth century." The subject and methodology of this new discipline were set forth for the first time by the two editors of *RIEB*—the Croat Petar Skok (1881–1956) and the Serb Milan Budimir (1891–1975).[56] Starting from the observation of the "estrangement of the Balkan sciences into national compartments," which had led to "duplication of state particularism with scientific particularism," Budimir and Skok argued for the "coordination of national academic Balkan studies, giving them cohesion and, above all, orienting them towards the study of a Balkan organism that constituted one whole since the most distant times."[57] According to them, two historical tendencies—unification and particularism—had crystallized into "a unique law of the Balkans [*loi balkanique*] guiding the vicissitudes of the totality of their history." Since antiquity these two tendencies had alternated and defined

55 *Balkan i Balkanci* (Belgrade: Izdanje Balkanskog instituta, 1937), 140.

56 For a broader discussion of Budimir and Skok's "Balkanological manifesto," see Diana Mishkova, "What's in Balkan History: Spaces and Scales in the Tradition of Southeast-European Studies," *Southeastern Europe* (Brill) 34, no. 1 (2010): 55–86; Diana Mishkova, "Politics of Regionalist Science: Southeastern Europe as a Supranational Space in Late Nineteenth–Mid-Twentieth Century Academic Projects," *East Central Europe* 39 (2012): 1–38.

57 Milan Budimir and Petar Skok, "But et signification des études balkaniques," *Revue internationale des études balkaniques* (*RIEB*) 1 (1934): 2–3.

the peculiar evolution of this region; the major forces of "Balkan aggregation" had been the Macedonian dynasty, the Romans, the Byzantine Empire, and the Ottoman Empire. Significantly, the role of the "Turks" in imposing social and political cohesion on the whole region was seen as the most salient. Echoing nineteenth-century Romanticism, modern academics often misinterpreted the results of the aggregation achieved by the Ottoman Empire. Modern academics refused to see anything beneficial in a regime that had never implemented the denationalizing policy characteristic of many European states.

Geared towards highlighting the foundations of a future "regional aggregation," the Yugoslav Balkanologists were keen to emphasize the spheres in which the unifying impact of the Ottomans had been most consequential. First, by imposing uniform political and social conditions, the Turks had effectively amalgamated the mentality of the Balkan peoples. By favoring, at the same time, the mixture of Balkan races, they somewhat effaced the psychological differences that the previous particularist medieval states had induced. Another unifying factor was "Oriental urbanism"—the Balkan city created by the Turks, which was "totally different from the ancient and the European." The Christian Balkan village, on the other hand, "developed an exuberant folklore life" and maintained the ancient (patriarchal) arrangement of social life. Most notably, Turkish domination was credited for having ensured "the return of literature and culture to its original source," namely, to the unwritten popular, folklore literature—the kernel of any national culture.

> In reality, for the literary and artistic creativity of the Balkans, Turkish domination meant a shift from the Byzantine and the purely Christian Western ideology to the national one and a return to the original Slavic, popular founts . . . The Turks' accomplishment, although unintentional, is that Balkan literatures became national.[58]

Individual Balkan revivals, and to some extent national "individualities" themselves, thus became conceivable only in the framework of the Ottoman Empire. The whole Romantic structure of nationhood in its Eurocentric mold was turned on its head, without, however, subverting the state-building project as such. Above all, this was meant to undercut the Orientalist connotations of the notion of the Balkans as the Ottoman legacy in Europe, not by asserting an inherent difference from the Ottomans, as the national sciences typically did, but by inverting and even aestheticizing Ottoman rule and backwardness: they

58 Budimir and Skok, "But et signification des études balkaniques," 5–6, 12; *Balkan i Balkanci*, 84–85, 93–94.

came to figure as the necessary conditions for the preservation and development of the unique Balkan virtues and potential, which were superior to the Western ones but undermined by the impact of the West.

The aforementioned Romanian medievalist and director of the Balkan Studies Institute in Bucharest, Victor Papacostea, considered the adoption or forced imposition of the very idea of the nation-state, one that was "created in the West and for the West," to have had catastrophic consequences in the Balkans. Unlike Western Europe, he noted, it was a region marked by a unity of economic geography, by "the same community of culture and civilization born by long coexistence," and by being "in the main subordinated to the same political systems and influenced by the same currents of ideas." Above all, it was the "common ethnic base" and the "millennia-long mixture of races that had resulted, ever since antiquity, in the strongly relative value of the idea of nationality in the Balkans." Papacostea spoke instead of a "Balkan nationality," "Balkan society," and "*homo balcanicus*" as well as of the "misplaced and ridiculous exaltation of national particularisms." The system of research that he promoted thus challenged the legitimacy of the nation-state framework and called for "a new historical synthesis of Southeast [European] humankind."[59]

The "new science" of Balkanology presents an interesting concoction of concepts and perspectives. As a research manifesto, it was in many ways a remarkably enlightened one. Balkanology was defined as "an inherently comparative science" whose aim was "to get to know what was and is typical of the Balkans."[60] "Scientific research in the Balkans—in linguistics, historiography, ethnography, folklore, economics, arts, literature, etc.," Victor Papacostea wrote, "cannot be chained in national compartments but become unified through close intellectual cooperation and through persistent application of the comparative methods in all above-mentioned disciplinary fields."[61] Consequently, a division of labor was suggested: the study of only what was specific to a given people was to be left to the specialists in the national sciences. Balkanology was meant to deal with the general, the syncretic—the "Balkan reality," the "Balkan man," the "Balkan organism," the "Balkan laws"—not with the nationally specific. It came up with a research agenda and a method aimed at a regional "synthesis drawing on the elements of Balkan interdependence and unity."[62] In fact, the

59 Victor Papacostea, "Balcanologia," *Sud-Estul şi Contextul European. Bulletin al Institutului de Studii Sud-Est Europene* 6 (1996): 69–78; "Avant-Propos," *Balcania* 1 (1938): iii–vii; "La Péninsule Balkanique et le problème des études comparées," *Balcania* 6 (1943): iii–xxi.

60 Budimir and Skok, "But et signification des études balkaniques," 23–24.

61 Victor Papacostea, "Balcanologia," 73.

62 Papacostea, "Avant-Propos," vi.

advocacy of transnational comparison as a method of proper historical explanation led Skok and Budimir to transcend the confines of the region and call for a cross-regional comparison of the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans with that of the Arabs in the Iberian peninsula. This, at the same time, did not undermine ethnic and national frameworks: the actual historical "actors" were, invariably and self-evidently, "the Balkan peoples," if not at all times "the Balkan states."[63]

The "domains of Balkanology," where the comparative method was deemed particularly pertinent, were history (especially political, cultural, and religious history); linguistics (which "has given the model of what should be done for the other national sciences in the Balkans, particularly for folklore and literature"); economic development; law; the arts; architecture; painting; and especially those sciences whose object was "the Balkan man": anthropology, demography, statistics, and human geography.[64] This ambitious agenda had two facets—theoretical and practical. "As a theoretical science [Balkanology] is called to deepen our knowledge about the relations between the Balkan peoples and throw light on the intrinsic laws which had governed and continue to govern their development and their life." As a practical science, it had moral importance in that it was "entitled to influence the Balkan mentality" by giving Balkan statesmen the opportunity to know the Balkan man, his natural and social environment, and way of thinking and feeling, and at the same time by teaching the Balkan peoples the necessity to know, understand, and cooperate with each other.[65]

Informing this transnational agenda, on the other hand, was a metahistorical Balkanistic discourse that borrowed heavily from the discourse of national autochthonism. Several imports from the then-prevalent national autochthonist visions—the arguments about the profound cultural difference between the countries of the region and the Occident, about the "irreducible Balkan individuality" and global mission, the region's self-reliance and self-sufficiency, and the notion of (region-wide) renaissance—became hallmarks of interwar Balkanology.

The point of departure was the proposition that "To Balkanology befalls the thankless task to combat a prejudice that for centuries has been deeply rooted in the [European] public opinion"—the assumption that the Balkans were lacking in civilization and abounding in militancy—and to rectify the "general misunderstanding of all things Balkan [that] has become one of

63 Budimir and Skok, "But et signification des études balkaniques," 7–12.

64 Ibid., 13–19.

65 Ibid., 24–25.

the characteristics of the average intellectual in Europe."[66] In serving this task, the rigorous scholarly agenda was augmented by a series of parahistorical, cultural-morphological statements that lent the whole project a distinct ideological orientation.

In a strategic text entitled "The Balkan Destinies," the *RIEB*'s editors evoked "the two most precious elements" that the "Balkan man" had granted to human progress: "the spirit of independence (= individualism) and the spirit of association (= collectivism)." Accordingly, the editors not only attributed a "higher biological value" to the Balkan melting pot (*l'unité à variations, l'unité variée*) but paid tribute to it as a source of humanism and heroism, of a fierce sense of independence and an urge for solidarity. The "immanent" Balkan violence, it was asserted, was utterly alien to the local tradition and imposed from the outside. It made its inroads during the Rissorgimento, the period of the national struggles, and the creation of the free Balkan states, when a major "reorientation of Balkan civilization" took place: Oriental culture in its Islamic form gave way to Western culture, based on scientific and technological progress. It was at this juncture that the Balkan scholars saw the source of a major historical regression:

> European civilization failed to give the Balkan peoples internal cohesion, appeasement, and good mutual relations; it failed to develop among them the spirit of association or nourish the spirit of true independence. . . . Europe, which had suffered and continues to suffer from lack of cohesion, was not in a position to bestow on the Balkans that which it did not itself possess.

Hence, unlike all previous civilizations—Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, or Ottoman—"modern European culture divided the inhabitants of the peninsula politically and morally at the same time as it leveled them through its cultural influence."[67]

The Balkanistic literature intended for domestic consumption was more explicitly anti-Western and anti-capitalist. It held that not only the rivalries and bloody wars between the Balkan peoples and the inhibited consciousness about fated community and solidarity but also the political, economic, social, and cultural backwardness of the Balkan nations were the product of great power interference in the region. The overall political and economic development of Europe created an abnormal situation. Selfishness, greed, mistrust,

66 Ibid., 19. See also *Knjiga o Balkanu*, vol. 1 (Belgrade: Balkanski institut, 1936), x–xii.

67 Petar Skok and Milan Budimir, "Destinées balkaniques," *RIEB* 2, no. 4 (1936): 601–606.

and fear reigned in high politics, and the Balkans became their focal point and victim. Europe in the past had incited unrest in the Balkans and among the Balkan people in order to justify its interference in purely Balkan matters. Thus due to extraregional factors, the Balkans became "a powderkeg" fueled by "barbarians," who had to be subdued and enlightened.[68]

Where did this proto-Orientalist critique lead? More radically than Iorga, interwar Balkanologists embarked on vindicating the "strong and irreducible Balkan individuality," which they saw as a token of the region's "historic function":

> Even if on the geographical map of Europe the Balkans is a part of Europe, it is not only that. The Balkans is more than the European Southeast. It is a world clasp. This clasp has a greater responsibility and heavier duty than Europe. The Balkans is not only Christian as the rest of Europe is. The Balkans is a true cohabitation [*opštežitije*] of races and peoples, faiths, and social groups bound together . . . by a common fate stronger than ecclesiastical links and social prejudices. Thus the Balkans is something authentic within the old continents: neither Europe nor Asia . . . neither European East nor Asian West, but a unique area with specific characteristics and specific assignment. This position of the Balkans also defines the fate of the Balkan peoples. They thus become intermediaries and warriors; defenders of the West against the East; protectors of the North against the South; keepers of the Balkan threshold in front of the Western people; and the main intermediaries between the fresh and coarse North and the warm, early-blooming, and faded South.[69]

The culmination of this line of reasoning was the entreaty that "the Balkans itself should define its proper cultural orientation . . . with a view to create on these bases a better common Balkan fatherland [*une patrie balkanique commune*], where humanism and heroism will reign freely."[70] Throughout all its great eras the peninsula had an authentic spiritual orientation, which manifested itself in "a sort of homogeneity unique to the peninsula."

> This Balkan spirit demands first of all that the whole spiritual and material civilization, such as it has emerged in the Balkans, should be envisaged, criticized, and organized not in view of Western Europe but, above

68 *Balkan i Balkanci*, 15–22, 54.

69 *Balkan i Balkanci*, 26.

70 Skok and Budimir, "Destinées balkaniques," 607.

> all, in view of the needs of the Balkan fatherland taken as a whole. Any foolish dashing after Europe. . . . precludes the revival of the Balkan peoples and the resurrection of the Balkan spirit.[71]

All this closely resonates with the prevailing "nativist" currents and autarchic thrusts in the nationalist political and intellectual thought of the late 1920s and the 1930s, captured by calls for the resurgence of national authenticity and self-sufficiency. The themes of the disruptive and degrading impact of Europe and inorganic Western imports on the texture of society, the breach of tradition and the lack of cultural continuity, the call for liberation from the tyranny of Western precedence and authority, the search for a new identity and a new mission—these were *topoi* that transgressed the boundaries of the national and regional discourses.

For Balkan scholars and intellectuals, the Balkan idea of the 1930s was an emancipatory one. On the one hand, it was an attempt at offsetting the impotence of small statehood in the geopolitical ambience of the 1930s. Without unity, no part of the Balkans could advance politically, economically, socially or culturally. Without it, the Balkans could not prevent the "selfish and destructive" interference of non-Balkan factors and influences in the internal affairs of the individual states—interference that hindered their development, sowed enmity, and threatened them with "enslavement." This entailed the need for "full emancipation from *all* harmful and demeaning cultural, political, and economic influences from outside." Therefore, argued the founders of the Balkan Institute in Belgrade, "To protect the Balkans as one entity, to preserve it for the Balkan peoples themselves, this today is the only true and the greatest national idea . . . Our patriotism, if it wants to be real, should be a Balkan patriotism."[72] At the same time, taking a cue from the earlier tradition of Balkan studies as epitomized by Shishmanov and Iorga, it was an effort to rebut the Balkans' unwholesome reputation by asserting the region's primordial cultural creativity, revolutionary energy, and civilizational potential and to combat the nation's symbolic underdog position with the proxy of regional dignity. Resistance to hegemonic pressures in the interwar period thus manifested itself in both regionalist and autochthonist directions.

A striking feature of all this was the complete reversal that the valence of the term "Balkans"—and of being Balkan—underwent within a large range of converging scholarly and political discourses in the 1930s. The movement toward

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71 Ibid., 610–611.

72 Ratko Parežanin and Svetozar Spanačević, "Der neue Balkan," *RIEB* 2, no. 4 (1936): 321; *Knjiga o Balkanu*, vol. 1, vii–ix.

a "Balkan Conference" and "Balkan Pact," and the founding of "Balkan institutes" to conduct "Balkan research," converged in the slogan "the Balkans for the Balkan peoples," which, as a contemporary political observer noted, "aimed to create a new political concept of the Balkans by the Balkan countries themselves" and "an autonomous organization of a part of Southeastern Europe."[73] References to "Balkan unification," "Balkaners," and "Balkan man" (and "Balkan woman") abounded in discussions even of the earliest historical times. Despite their often overblown, "unscientific" historical argumentation, the German historian Georg Stadtmüller (1909–1985) commented, such appeals were "important for historical research as evidence of the elemental strength with which the consciousness of a common all-Balkan destiny breaks in and conquers public opinion in the present-day Balkans. This is the promulgation of a new political consciousness."[74] Apparently, it was "the Balkans," with its claim to a special culture and a special legacy, not the faceless "Southeastern Europe," that could serve as the basis for such consciousness. The Balkanologists' manifest objective, moreover, was to rehabilitate the Balkans and turn its negative semantics on its head rather than eschew the whole issue by choosing "some new academic name like 'Southeast' or 'Southeastern Europe.'" The Balkans' "exemplary religious and social tolerance and its merits for European culture"—arguably fostered by the centuries of Ottoman domination—"compel us to keep the appellation 'Balkan' and not be ashamed of our name."[75]

Extra-regional, especially German, scholarship participated in this construction of a particular Balkan world and Balkan man. In his *Heroische Lebensform*, Gerhard Gesemann (1888–1948), a prominent German Slavist and founding director of the German Scientific Institute in Belgrade (1939–1941), eulogized Balkan patriarchal life, adopting much of Cvijić's *Völkerpsychologie* imagery, and spoke of Balkan "heroism" (*Hendeltum*) and *humanitas heroica*.[76] Gesemann directly participated in the invention and endorsement of what he called "the Balkan ideology" with the full awareness that an ideology could not be "right" or "wrong" but effective or ineffective in achieving its goals and

73 Franz Ronneberger, "Der politische Südosteuropabegriff," *Reich Volksordnung Lebensraum* 6 (1943): 75–76.

74 Georg Stadtmüller, "Balkan i balkanci," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 4, nos. 3–4 (1939): 497–498.

75 Stadtmüller, "Balkan i balkanci," 54–55, 64.

76 Gerhard Gesemann, *Heroische Lebensform: Zur Literatur und Wesenskunde der balkanischen Patriarchalität* (Berlin: Wiking-Verlag, 1943). Like Shishmanov, Gesemann was a disciple of August Leskien. During the 1930s he was a professor in Slavic studies in Prague and editor of the *Slavistische Rundschau, Bücherei Südosteuropa*, and *Stimmen aus dem Südosten*.

"becoming itself a cultural-historical fact" that produced "new facts." In order to acquire cultural and political shape and gain recognition, the Balkan idea, he said, had to solve three main tasks. First, it had to counteract "proficiently and effectively" the allegations of cultural inferiority. Second, the inhabitants of the Balkans themselves had to be cured of their ignorance of their proper folk and cultural values and shed the feeling of inferiority inculcated in them because of their lagging behind Euro-American "progress." Third, a consciousness of Balkan solidarity had to be brought about through "scientifically immaculate presentation, comprehension, and illustration of the common ground and common characteristics of the inhabitants of the region." All this, at the same time, could not be allowed to cut the Balkans off from Europe, because the emphasis on the Balkans' distinctiveness and specific values was inherently linked with the recognition of these values by the whole European cultural community. This meant, however, that this Europe should not be the one of Balkanophobe journalism and cultural exclusion or the one that frivolously exploited Balkan exoticism for various purposes. Acquaintance with the Balkan patriarchy, for example, had considerably enriched the spiritual aspect of the German classics and Romanticism, partly through the inspiration deriving from the exotic but, above all, by deepening the knowledge of the Germans' proper self, about their own ancient patriarchy and folk tradition. Gesemann thus came up with an anti-Orientalist program couched in the then-fashionable *völkisch* paradigm.[77]

Some Western academic circles, such as in France, which grew increasingly apprehensive of the German and Italian influence in the area, promoted their own versions of "positive" Balkanism.[78] Jacques Ancel (1879–1943), generally considered the leading French geographer of the Balkans, spoke about a "unity of Balkan civilization" defined by similar, pastoral and agrarian, ways of life and about a common "psychology of the Balkan peoples" nurtured by geographical links, common customs, and historical fate. Ancel also advocated a pan-Balkan union based on these societies' rural-democratic and anti-urban leanings and on their will for economic and political rebuilding.[79] On the whole, however, French scholarship in the interwar period, markedly pro-Yugoslav and

77 Gerhard Gesemann, "Bakanische Betrachtungen," *RIEB* 3 (1938): 484–491.

78 "France, despite her victory, remained insecure, and successive French governments reacted to German attempts at revision by erecting a system of alliances in Central Europe based on a defensive policy of mutual fear": Lisanne Radice, "The Eastern Pact, 1933–1935: A Last Attempt at European Co-operation," *SEER* 55, no. 1 (1977): 45–46.

79 Jacques Ancel, *Peuples et nations des Balkans: géographie politique* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1926), 9–10, 135–136; Jacques Ancel, "La montagne et l'unité de la civili-

pro-Romanian, reflected the French partiality for the pro-status-quo Balkan Entente rather than a stronger interest in the area. After 1934 and until the 1960s, the Balkans disappeared from the French-language geographical literature, whereas studies in regional history, philology, linguistics, and ethnography gravitated around the Paris-based Institut d'Études Slaves and École des Langues Orientales Vivantes, not "Balkan studies."[80]

In Britain several journals dealt with issues of the region, yet none of them featured "Balkans" or "Southeastern Europe" in its title. British scholarly interest in the Balkans and Southeastern Europe followed in the footsteps of Britain's onetime political interests in that it was heavily tilted towards diplomatic history, mainly the history of the Eastern Question, the British and Russian policy toward the Ottoman Empire and the Balkans, and the background to World War I.[81] The chief authority on Central European and Balkan history and politics during that period, Robert William Seton-Watson (1879–1951), was a scholar and political activist who called for the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian Empire on behalf of the subject Romanians, Slovaks, Czechs, and South Slavs and played an active role in the emergence of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia during and after World War I. R.W. Seton-Watson's publications after the war tallied with these commitments and partisanship, focusing on the "rise of nationality" in the Balkans and Central Europe, the "origins of World War I," and Britain's role in the Eastern Question.[82]

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sation balkanique," *Annales de géographie* 36 (1927): 74–76; Jacques Ancel, "Essai d'une psychologie des peuples balkaniques," *Les Balkans* 4 (1933): 1–10.

80 The former institute was founded in 1919 with the support of the French, Czechoslovak, Yugoslav, and later Polish governments, and published *Revue des Etudes Slaves*; it dealt with Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, mainly in the time-honored frame of counterposing the Slavs to the Germans; the latter institute dealt with Romania, Greece, and Turkey. See Georges Castellan, "Les études sur le Sud-Est européen en France," *Association Internationale d'Etudes du Sud-Est Européen, Bulletin* 12, no. 2 (1974): 361–366; Alfred Fichelle, "Origines et développement de l'Institut d'Études Slaves (1919–1949)," *Revue des Études Slaves* 27 (1951): 91–103.

81 J.A.R. Marriott, *The Eastern Question: An Historical Study in European Diplomacy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1917); H.W.V. Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1936); B.H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans, 1870–1880* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937); W.N. Medlicott, *The Congress of Berlin and After* (London: Mathuen & Co., 1938); B.E. Schmitt, *The Annexation of Bosnia, 1908–1909* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937).

82 R.W. Seton-Watson has been described as "indefatigable in his output," and only some of his works can be listed here: *The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy* (London: Constable & Co., 1911); *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans* (London: Constable & Co., 1917); *Europe in the Melting-Pot* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1919); *Sarajevo: A Study*

As in the previous period, German contribution to the research on the Balkans and Southeastern Europe was substantial. During this period, however, Vienna lost its leading position in this field to centers in Germany. The practitioners of *Südostforschung* / *Südosteuropa-Forschung* active after World War I, like Fritz Valjavec (1909–1960), Georg Stadtmüller, Otto Maull (1887–1957), Franz Ronneberger (1913–1999), Josef Matl (1897–1974), and Hermann Gross (1903–2002), were the most powerful external generators of regional frameworks, even if their impact on the "internal" spatial constructions proved to be, on the whole, limited.[83] The intensive promotion of *Südostforschung* continued during the Nazi era, when it became institutionalized, buoyed by a growing affinity of ideas and politics between the regime and most of those engaged in the field. The beginnings were already established under the Weimar Republic, when institutes for the study of the economy and German culture in Central and Southeastern Europe were set up in Leipzig and Munich. Following that was the establishment of the Südosteuropa-Institut in Leipzig (1936) and the launching of the first German university chair in Southeast European history (headed by Georg Stadtmüller, 1938). The Südost-Institut in Munich emerged in 1930 on the initiative of the Ministry of the Interior with the intention to become the center of German historical studies of Southeastern Europe—a task it largely succeeded at while demonstrating strong continuities, in both personnel and thematic orientation, across the 1945 watershed.[84]

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in the Origin of the Great War (London: Hutchinson, n.d. [1926]); *The Role of Bosnia in International Politics 1875–1919* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1932); *A History of the Roumanians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934); *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question* (London: Cass, 1935). R.W. Seton-Watson was also a founder and co-editor (with Tomáš Masaryk) of the journal *The New Europe*, where he published articles on Central Europe and the Balkans under the pseudonym of Scotus Viator. See N.B. Jopson, "The School of Slavonic and East European Studies: The First Fifty Years 1922–37," *Slavonic and East European Review* 44, no. 102 (1966): 3.

83 On the history of *Südostforschungen*, see Fritz Valjavec, "Wege und Wandlungen deutscher Südostforschung," *Südostdeutsche Forschungen* I (1936), 1–14; Fritz Valjavec, "Der Werdegang," 1–37; Krista Zach, "Die Anfänge der deutschen Südosteuropaforschung und die Münchner Zeitschrift Südost-Forschungen," *Tübinger Geographische Forschungen* 128 (2000): 267–301; Heinrich Felix Schmid, "Fünfzig Jahre historische Ostforschung in Österreich," *Studien zur älteren Geschichte Osteuropas*, part 2, ed. Heinrich Felix Schmid (Graz, 1959), 7–13.

84 Edgar Hösch, "Südosteuropa in der Historiographie der Bundesrepublik nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg bis in die 1980er Jahre," in *Hundert Jahre Osteuropäische Geschichte. Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft*, ed. Dittmar Dahlmann (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), 110–111. Initially, the official journal of the Institute in Munich bore the title *Südostdeutsche Forschungen*; in 1940 it was renamed *Südost-Forschungen*, arguably to

Since the 1920s, therefore, the long-term German geopolitical and economic interest in the area became couched in the Greater German view of history and *Volkstumsideologie*, while *Südosteuropaforschung* evolved into a "warring science" increasingly entangled with Nazi racial policy and expansionism.[85]

Since the National Socialist takeover in 1933, the German understanding of the region was closely associated with the hegemonic project of *Wirtschaftsraum Grossdeutschland Südost* (a Greater German economic space incorporating the Southeast) and more specifically with the notion of *Ergänzungswirtschaft*—a supplementary economic area of the Third Reich, thus a natural component of the German *Lebensraum*.[86] The proponents of this concept postulated the inseparability of Southeastern Europe and Germany based on geographical, historical, spiritual, political, and ethnic affinities and, above all, economic complementarity. Other exponents of interwar *Südostforschung* sought to vindicate "Southeastern Europe" as a political term designating a geopolitical area whose coherence and well-being required the organizational power of the Reich. According to Franz Ronneberger, what marked Southeastern Europe (which included the Slovaks, Magyars, Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbs, Albanians, Croats, and Slovenes) was the absence of one nationality numerically large enough to create a stable political center and exert a pull on the other nationalities. The inference drawn from this was the same as that drawn by the Reich's economists, namely that "This space does not and cannot have a proper political life."[87] Yet Ronneberger conceded that Southeastern Europe was not a "rigid, immutable unit" and that its borders "will always remain fluid and dependent on political assumptions." Academic "purity," he said, was impossible in this case, since "we are dealing with a markedly political academic field," and the issue of whether a certain

broaden its appeal by dropping the old-fashioned, nationalistic *Südostdeutsch* from its title. On the institutional development and the continuities of the Südost-Institut across the prewar and postwar eras, see the useful article by Gerhard Seewann, "Das Südost-Institut 1930–1960," in *Südostforschung im Schatten des Dritten Reiches*, eds. Mathias Beer and Gerhard Seewann (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2004), 49–92.

85 Mathias Beer, "Wege zur Historisierung der Südostforschung. Voraussetzungen, Ansätze, Themenfelder," in *Südostforschung im Schatten des Dritten Reiches*, eds. Beer and Seewann, 14–15.

86 Andrej Mitrović, "Ergänzungswirtschaft: The Theory of an Integrated Economic Area of the Third Reich and Southeast Europe (1933–1941)," in *The Third Reich and Yugoslavia 1933–1945* (Belgrade: Institute for Contemporary History, 1977), 7–45.

87 Ronneberger, "Der politische Südosteuropabegriff," 53–107. See also Karl C. v. Lösch, "Was ist Mitteleuropa?" *Volk und Reich* 12, no. 2 (1936): 85–96.

nation belonged "to Southeastern Europe, Central Europe, or the Balkans—or any other of the many terms for the region—is, without exception, a political decision."[88]

The work of the Südostdeutsche Institut in Graz, founded immediately after Austria's annexation by the German Reich in 1938, exemplifies a radical form of academic compliance. It collaborated closely with the Nazi authorities on specific projects in, for example, cartography and population statistics that were used in carrying out the deportations.[89] Oliver Jens Schmitt has, however, suggested distinguishing—"thematically, institutionally, and in terms of personnel"—between Austrian Balkan studies, which looked at the Balkans as an integrated cultural and "old European" space and was increasingly depoliticized, and the Austrian (and German) *Südostforschung*, with its politically hegemonic goals and fixation on areas with significant German-speaking populations. Before being silenced in 1934, the former school, with roots in the prewar Austrian tradition of Balkan studies, was represented by the archaeologist and classicist Karl Patsch and the linguists Nikolay S. Trubetskoy and Norbert Jokl (1877–1942).[90]

It would nonetheless be misleading to infer that German *Südostforschung*, much of which was carried out with considerable erudition and dexterity, was simply a geopolitically contingent enterprise. Some of its champions, like Fritz Valjavec, left remarkably insightful regional conceptualizations, in many respects presaging the present-day debates on the "makings" and transience of regions. For Valjavec the Balkans was neither geographical and territorial nor political but a historical space: its *relative* internal cohesion was cultural-morphological, resting mainly on the Byzantine and the Ottoman historical layers. After their secession from the Ottoman Empire, the Balkan states underwent a process of fast and sweeping Europeanization, which implied "cultural 'de-Byzantinization' and 'de-Balkanization.'" State-promoted nationalism further undermined the "common Balkan traits" bequeathed by the previous political unity. Thus, under the growing sway of the West and nationalism, the Balkans were becoming ever more "Southeast European" in the sense of acquiring sociopolitical and cultural elements common to the entire European Southeast (which included not only the Balkans but also Hungary and Slovakia). The Balkan Wars and World War I thus signaled, in Valjavec's opinion, the *terminus ante quem* of the Balkans.

88 Ronneberger, "Der politische Südosteuropabegriff," 66.

89 See Christian Promizer, "Täterwissenschaft Das Südostdeutsche Institut in Graz," in *Südostforschung im Schatten des Dritten Reiches*, eds. Beer and Seewann, 93–113.

90 Schmitt, "Balkanforschung an der Universität Wien," 63, 79–85.

By contrast, and despite the need for a single concept capable of embracing the successors to the Ottoman and the Habsburg empires, Valjavec admitted the lack of an "at least to some extent unitary research area and unitary concept of Southeastern Europe" (*einheitlichen Südosteuropabegriff*). It connoted a geographical rather than a cultural area, despite certain similarities in terms of agrarian socioeconomic profile and the ways parliamentary systems were adopted and functioning. For him Southeast European studies was a methodical "*complexio oppositorum*" (bringing together a wide range of simultaneously applied disciplinary methods), where Southeastern Europe served above all as a "working concept" (*Arbeitsbegriff*) rather than an integrated unit of analysis. Its "spatial-territorial boundaries remain fluid," also involving extensive "intermediate and transitory" peripheral zones; its unity was not a precondition for the research on this area, but a way of looking at it and of proceeding.[91] Therefore, Valjavec insisted, "Southeastern Europe and the Balkans are two different notions. Their exploration does not always coincide."[92]

Taking seriously the underlying geopolitical stakes, one should at the same time recognize that Valjavec's vision of historical spaces is remarkably modern. He neatly distinguished between the historical, and thus transient, reality of the Balkans as the Byzantine-Ottoman legacy and the "working concept" of Southeastern Europe, and underscored the variability of boundaries in time and space. In this he made explicit the connection between regional (re-)conceptualizations and political changes in not only spatial but also—indeed, mainly—social terms: it was through industrialization, migration, and the politics of national homogenization that the Balkans was divested of its Byzantine-Ottoman, "Balkan" attributes to become part of a bigger "European" whole. In Valjavec's spatial conceptualization, therefore, diachronic dynamics and historical change took center stage. That said, one cannot fail to note the convenient fit of his theoretically and methodologically sophisticated line of reasoning with the propaganda declaration of the German press, in 1940, that "the Balkans is dead" and that "Southeastern Europe is born."[93] More importantly, since the Balkans, not Southeastern Europe, inspired the variety of

91 Valjavec, "Der Werdegang," 15, 32; Valjavec, "Südosteuropa und Balkan. Forschungsziele und Forschungsmöglichkeiten," *Südost-Forschungen* 7 (1942), 1–8. "We do not believe," Valjavec wrote, "in the gradual development of any 'Southeast European community' that would in time create a unified entity in Southeastern Europe" ("Südosteuropa und Balkan," 7).

92 Fritz Valjavec, "Zur Kritik unde Methodik der Südosteuropa-Forschungen, *Südost-Forschungen* 7 (1942): 219.

93 Ristović, "'The Birth of Southeastern Europe' and the 'Death of the Balkans.'".

local political and intellectual projects on the region between the wars, the *Balkanforscher* and the *Südostforscher* rarely engaged in a mutual dialogue.

Generally it can be said that, while the interwar period saw the emergence and the institutionalization of the paradigm of regional comparative "humanities," nowhere did it actually come to dominate actual research. Even when interwar academia dealt with problems outside the national orbit, it treated them in connection with individual national histories. Notable exceptions were the Byzantine and Ottoman studies undertaken from the perspective of the imperial center, Constantinople/Istanbul, while the studies from the point of view of the imperial periphery remained firmly embedded in the national framework.[94] Furthermore, in most of the cases national and regional frames were not in tension, as the regional projects themselves were deeply politicized and were often subordinated to the national geopolitical agendas.

4 The Southeast European Academic Movement After World War II

For about twenty years after World War II, Balkan studies was submerged. The Balkanski Institut in Belgrade was closed in 1941 under German pressure; the Institute of Southeast European Studies and the Institute of Balkan Studies and Research in Bucharest were shut down in 1948 by the communist regime, which saw them as carriers of "bourgeois cosmopolitanism and objectivism."[95] Earlier divisions and "Europe" itself were overshadowed by the new political, economic, and ideological schism between the socialist and the non-socialist world. For the scholars in the region, the relocation of most of the Balkans/Southeastern Europe into Eastern Europe was a political act with far-reaching military and economic consequences and totally restructured terms of international affiliation. In terms of the actual spatial categories they were operating with, however, its impact was far less straightforward. Although the 1960s and 1970s saw some serious attempts from both sides of the Iron Curtain at

94 See Diana Mishkova, "The Afterlife of a Commonwealth: Narratives of Byzantium in the National Historiographies of Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Romania," in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. 3: *Shared Pasts, Disputed Legacies*, eds. Roumen Daskalov and Alexander Vezenkov (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), 118–273.

95 See the essay by the main engineer of cultural repression and Stalinist discourse in the social sciences in Romania: Leonte Răutu, *Împotriva cosmopolitismului şi obiectivismului burghez în ştiinţele sociale* (Bucharest: Editura P.M.R., 1949). Postwar communist Yugoslavia did not treat the activists of the Balkanski Institut any better: its directors, Ratko Parežanin and Svetozar Spanačević, were declared "enemies of the people," and the latter died in prison in 1947.

endowing Eastern Europe with historical meaning, the concept itself failed to become a focus of self-identification or powerful frame of reference. For some time after the war, the "people's democracies" and the quasi-political notion of "Slavdom," as counter-concepts of the imperialist West and Teutonic pressure, gained currency and, in the following years, lingered on, but with diminishing appeal.[96] Starting in the late 1950s, "Europe" recovered its status as a benchmark—whether to demonstrate identity or differentiation—for the historical modernization and civilizational profile of these societies. In the socialist states, this was mediated by ideologically recalibrated concepts of progress, historical laws, and progressive social forces within a correspondingly readjusted teleological frame. But the core of the social-science vocabulary related to "feudalism," "capitalism," "nationalism," social "classes," and "stages of economic development" remained palpably Euro- (or Western-) centric.

Beyond these general lines, the question about the actual postwar cartographies of the discrete Balkan scholarly communities has no simple answer. In terms of geopolitical affiliation in this period, we can roughly distinguish three categories of states: NATO members Greece and Turkey; communist Romania and Bulgaria; and non-aligned Yugoslavia and maverick Albania. In terms of symbolic-cultural imageries and spatial self-identifications, however, discrete national viewpoints tended to override such grouping.

It is therefore significant that despite their different, and at times contradictory, geopolitical objectives, all these countries participated in the Southeast European academic movement. Research on Southeastern Europe resumed in the 1960s in an atmosphere of de-Stalinization, de-colonization, and political détente between the two blocs, when the Balkans was advertised as a zone of "peaceful coexistence between the two world systems" (meaning, in the Marxist-Leninist vocabulary, not an ideological respite but "a peculiar form of class struggle"[97]). What distinguished this period was the strong drive towards state-sponsored academic institutionalization of the field in all Balkan countries across the Iron Curtain.

In 1963, at the initiative of Romania and under the patronage of UNESCO, the *Association Internationale d'Etudes du Sud-Est Européene* (AIESEE), or

96 On Stalin's postwar Pan-Slavism and the re-emergence of the Institute of Slavic Studies as a key instrument ensuring "the leading place of Soviet Slavistics in the study of the Slavic peoples' history," see Marina Dostal', "Slavistika: mezhdu proletarskim internatsionalizmom i slavyanskoy ideiy," *Slavyanovedenie* 2 (2007): 26–30.

97 See in this sense Voin Božinov, "Peaceful Co-Existence in the Balkans and the Policy of the People's Republic of Bulgaria," in *Actes du Premier Congrès International des Etudes Balkaniques et Sud-Est Européennes*, vol. 5 (Sofia: AIESEE, 1970), 535–536.

International Association for the Study of Southeastern Europe, was set up. It aimed at "the promotion of Balkan and, in general, Southeast European studies in the sphere of the human sciences: history, archaeology, ethnography, linguistics, philology, literature, folklore, art, etc., from the most distant times to the present" through international exchange and scientific cooperation and by encouraging the creation and development of institutions for the study of Balkan and Southeast European civilizations.[98] Members of the Association were national committees of Balkan and Southeast European studies formed soon after the Association.[99] Between 1966 and 2009, AIESEE sponsored ten international congresses of Southeast European studies as well as colloquia, seminars, and conferences. It also published the *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* and a couple dozen volumes of studies, documents, and proceedings of colloquia that it helped organize.

The International Association for Southeast European Studies was conceived of and emerged as part of the UNESCO's Major Project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values.[100] The project was carried out between 1957 and 1966, a peak time of decolonization and Cold War tensions, with the avowed aim of removing "psychological and political obstacles to mutual understanding" linked to the social and political shifts in the Asian and the Arab world after World War II, through intensive programs in education, culture, and mass media. The Joint Declaration outlining the guiding principles for the project stopped short of proposing explicit definitions of either the "complementary" concepts of "East and West" or the contentious one of "cultural values." It did, however, take an emphatically non-essentialist approach by arguing that "Orient and Occident do not constitute entities in themselves, and can be defined in relation to each other only by means of the image that each forms of the other."[101] This terminological looseness opened a sufficiently wide space for the Southeast-Europeanists to position themselves with respect to the boundaries and the "cultural values" of East and West.

98 "Statuts de l'Association Internationale d'Etudes du Sud-Est Européenne (A.I.E.S.E.E.)," *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* 1, nos. 1–2 (1963): 19–20.

99 Over time their number grew to twenty-four, mostly from Europe, plus the United States, Japan, and Lebanon. The presidents of the national committees were members of the International Committee of AIESEE.

100 I thank Bogdan Iacob for sharing with me his work on the important role of UNESCO in the establishment of AIESEE and the early history of postwar Balkan studies in Romania.

101 "The Guiding Principles of the Orient-Occident Major Project," *Unesco Chronicle* 4, no. 4 (1958): 117.

Methodologically as well, the UNESCO East-West Major Project provided useful directions. Its "guiding principles" held that for concepts, ideas, and facts of history to be able to foster greater mutual appreciation of diverse cultures, they had to be treated in such a way as to exhibit the universality of each culture and its unique role in the progress of mankind.[102] What is notable here is the language of national cultural appreciation in which these precepts were couched. "Mutual respect and esteem," said UNESCO director-general Vittorio Veronese in 1959,

> are founded on the comprehension of the mind and soul of each nation, recognizing each one's own original contribution to the totality of values and norms that make life truly human . . . Far from inviting [the Eastern cultures] to renounce their own individuality in favour of an anonymous culture—that spurious ideal of a so-called world civilization—[the project] gives them on the contrary an opportunity fully to determine their own spiritual destiny within the great family of nations.[103]

The achievement of these goals was entrusted to a network of "associated institutions." By applying the comparative and interdisciplinary methods to the study of cultures, these institutes were supposed to promote "on a systematic basis and through a concerted program of scholarly works and publications the study of civilizations and their mutual interaction within a broad regional context, with special emphasis on their evolution and achievements."[104]

At the Sinaia colloquium, the envoy of the director-general of UNESCO and head of the Division for Philosophy and the Human Sciences, M.N. Bammate, explained the role his organization assigned to the Balkans and to Balkan studies in this grand agenda. He emphasized the "impossibility of counterposing the Occident and the Orient in a rigid duality" as "two worlds frozen in their particularisms and genius." There existed, he said, "a plurality of East and West that the reunion of scholars and the meetings between men of culture reveal to us." Moreover, there were "lands ordained by history to be privileged" in that they constituted "places of convergence . . . where the East and the West join, articulate and animate each other." The Balkans constituted just such a land,

102 Ibid., 117–120; T.V. Sathyamurthy, *The Politics of International Cooperation: Contrasting Conceptions of U.N.E.S.C.O.* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1964), 218.

103 Vittorino Veronese, "The East-West Major Project," *World Justice* 1, no. 3 (1959), 290, 294–295.

104 Bogdan Iacob, "From Periphery to Cardinal Borderland: The Balkans in UNESCO," *CAS Working Paper Series* 7 (Sofia: Centre for Advanced Study, 2015), 18.

and its multicultural "pungent perfume" made up its "unique and novel value" for the East-West Major Project. Finally, said Bammate, "the memory of that which constitutes the common patrimony of your civilizations" should serve to "demonstrate the present-day significance of this Balkan culture."[105] On later occasions the organization's high officials would also prove responsive to local sensitivities of a different kind. Thus in a conversation with Nicolae Ceaușescu, the director-general stated: "UNESCO plays an important role in aiding developing countries to create a national policy, to invent models and not to imitate the models of developed countries. In this way, multilateral activity is different from bilateral activity. In bilateral relations one often tends to practice the import-export of models. We, however, help them to find their own models."[106]

Both terminologically and methodologically, therefore, the UNESCO East-West Major Project provided a framework capable of accommodating the basic premises of prewar Balkanology and the ambitions of the Cold War Balkan academics to participate in redefining their countries' regional and global role. Its overall ideology—revolving around concepts like history, culture, civilization, patrimony, national policy, and national models, valuing national diversity, and underscoring that diversity's universal ("civilizational") value—made UNESCO and its East-West project convenient legitimating and internationally useful instruments in the hands of Balkan politicians and science policymakers.

The constitution of AIESEE triggered the foundation of Balkan or Southeast European institutes across the region starting with Romania (1963), then Bulgaria (1964), Yugoslavia (1969 in Belgrade; a Balkanološki Institut in Sarajevo was set up earlier, in 1954, and later renamed Centar za balkanološka ispitivanja), and Greece (Idryma Meleton Chersonisou tou Emou, opened in 1953). By the early 1970s specialized research units also emerged in the University of Istanbul (İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Güneydoğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Merkezi, with a seat in Edirne) and the Institute of History and Linguistics in Tirana. A number of related journals popped up—*Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Européennes* (Bucharest), *Etudes balkaniques* (Sofia), *Balcanica* (Belgrade), *Godišnjak, Centar za balknološka ispitivanja* (Sarajevo), *Balkan Studies* (Thessaloniki), and *Güneydoğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi*

105 "Allocution de M.N. Bammate, représentant du Directeur général de l'Unesco," in *Actes du Colloque International de Civilisation Balkaniques* (*Sinaia, 8–14 juillet 1962*) (Bucharest: Commission Nationale Roumaine pour l'UNESCO, n.d.).

106 "Notă convorbire între tovarășul Nicolae Ceaușescu și directorul general al UNESCO, René Maheu, 29 noiembrie," ANIC, fond CC al PCR—Secția Relații Externe, 224/1973, f. 11 (cited in Iacob, "From Periphery to Cardinal Borderland," 24).

(Istanbul)—together with specialized chairs in the major universities. Beginning in 1968, the institute in Sofia, and later the "International Center of Balkan Studies Documentation and Information" (set up, again with UNESCO's support, in 1976), published *Bibliographie d'etudes balkaniques*, covering all disciplines involved in the study of the region, including history, linguistics, literature, law, arts, ethnography, folklore, philosophy, and religion. Research at AIESEE took place in the framework of several permanent commissions (whose themes were heavily weighted towards the pre-modern and early-modern periods and imperial contexts) and a network of national committees for Balkan/Southeast European studies in and outside of the region.[107]

The idea of Balkan studies that most of these institutes and publications professed was one of a complex research area aimed at examining the Balkan nations in terms of their cultural, socioeconomic, and political interconnections and commonalities, from prehistoric to contemporary times. In most of these countries, the emergence of such institutes spurred the appearance, for the first time, of coherent conceptions about the need for interdisciplinary research, especially in historiography. However, the context where this took place enmeshed the incipient Balkan studies with the national centers of power and the pursuit of domestic- and foreign-policy agendas. In the postwar history of these studies, one cannot separate, even analytically, scholarship from cultural diplomacy and scholarly from political projects.

The unpublished documents concerning the organization and results of the First Congress of Balkan and Southeast European Studies, which took place in 1966 in Sofia, give some indications as to why.[108] In the opinion of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the BCP, the congress had to accomplish several political and scholarly tasks. These included Bulgarian scholars taking the initiative in this new academic field so that Bulgaria would become

107 The permanent commissions dealt, respectively, with folklore, post-Byzantine art, Ottoman archival sources, archaeology, Balkan linguistics, the history of ideas (Enlightenment), economic and social history from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, and contemporary history (created only in 1974). Vladimir Georgiev, "L'AIESEE et le développement des études sud-est européennes," *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* 11, nos. 1–2 (1973), 23. See also Emil Condurachi, *Association Internationale d'Etudes du Sud-Est Européenne: Buts et Activités (1963–1977)* (Bucharest: n.p., 1978).

108 I am grateful to Ivan Elenkov for his proficient guidance through the Bulgarian State Archive and for generously offering me access to his archival documentation. The following survey on the congress is based on the report of Nikolay Todorov, director of the Institute for Balkan Studies in Sofia, to the Central Committee of the BCP (Central State Archive [CSA], f.16, a.e. 6431, l. 114–130: Prof. N. Todorov. Informaciya za Părviya kongres po balkanistika [26 avgust–1 septemvri 1966 g.]).

one of the major centers of global Balkanistics and working to "ensure the dominant position of Marxist thought at the congress and prevent imperialist agents from exploiting remnants of the past and nationalist recidivisms."[109] Prior to the congress, the Bulgarian organizers and the Yugoslav delegates signed an agreement to avoid openly discussing issues on which the two sides had fundamental differences. The director of the Institute for Balkan Studies, Nikolay Todorov (1921–2003), felt this agreement "deserves the highest political and scientific commendation," since the Greek delegation might have otherwise seized the opportunity to disrupt the work of the congress.[110] The Bulgarian-Yugoslav agreement on "silencing" academic debates lined up with the political agreement Tito and Zhivkov had reached in the mid-1960s to avoid discussing the Macedonian Question at official bilateral meetings.[111] A similar preliminary agreement was reached with the leadership of the Soviet delegation to the effect that certain reports that contradicted "Bulgarian national history" were taken off the agenda of the congress on instructions from the Soviet leadership. Negotiations between the Soviet and Romanian historians were preceded by talks at the highest level, between Zhivkov and Ceaușescu, thus clearing the way for eliminating the passages in the Romanian reports judged to be anti-Bulgarian and anti-Soviet.[112] The organization of the Third Congress of Southeast European Studies in Bucharest in 1974 involved similar "preparatory" procedures.[113] A great deal of "tact and diplomatic skills" was needed to avoid disruptive disputes on such occasions, a participant in the Sofia congress observed.[114] Rather than showing faith in what AIESEE's first president, Denis (Dionysios) Zakythinos (1905–1993), called the "*chaleur confiante*" of scholarly

109 CSA, f. 1б, a.e. 6431, l. 114.

110 CSA, f. 1б, a.e. 6431, l. 115.

111 See Veselin Angelov, "Dokumenti. Makedonskiyat văpros v bălgaro-yugoslavskite otnosheniya spored provedeni razgovori i razmeni poslaniya mezhdu Todor Zhivkov i Josip Broz Tito (1965–1973 g)," *Izvestiya na Dărzhavnite Arhivi* 87 (2004), 83.

112 CSA, f. 1б, a.e. 6431, l. 111.

113 The report of the Propaganda Department of the Romanian Communist Party reads: "Measures have been taken for the good preparation of the congress in every respect. Thus, a group for reading the contributions from abroad was set up in order to spot the texts that might lead to problems" ("Informare privind stadiul de pregătire a celui de al III-lea Congres internațional de studii sud-est europene," ANIC, fond CC al PCR—Secția Agitație și Propagandă, 16/1974—cited in Bogdan C. Iacob, "Product of Appropriation: Southeast European Studies during the Cold War, 1963–1989," paper presented at the Center for Advanced Study, Sofia, May 28, 2014).

114 Leopold Kretzenbacher, "I. Internationaler Kongreß für Balkan- und Südosteuropa-Studien, Sofia 1966," *Südost-Forschungen* 25 (1966): 408–410.

dialogue, the organization of the Balkanistic congresses resembled the preparation for Cold War political summits.[115]

As regards the achievements of the first congress, N. Todorov reported:

> It became clear that the political objectives pursued by this congress (and it was obvious that the congress had a profound political meaning) are attainable not through demonstrations and sheer propaganda but through the constructive force of science, of the conscious attitude of scholarly workers to the issue of rapprochement and cooperation between neighboring and distant peoples.

In the opinion of the director of the Institute of Balkan Studies, "one of the greatest achievements of the congress" was "the failure of the strategy of Western agents and reactionary bourgeois science, which relied on differences between the socialist countries and was prepared to incite real and fictitious conflicts between them."[116] An organized offensive of bourgeois ideology failed to take place because the bourgeois front was not united; various small groups of scholars upheld different concepts. Against them the socialist countries had demonstrated unity of action.[117]

The report of the Romania delegation to the RCP's Department of Propaganda and Culture on the results of the first congress emphasized an "achievement" of a slightly different kind. It stated that the Romania delegates' main contribution to the congress was the "obtaining of new adherents to the points of view of Romanian historiography. Significant in this case is the fact that some delegates, confronted with the scientific arguments of the Romanians, renounced their opinions about our country, which were in contradiction with the historical truth."[118]

Twenty-five years after the founding of the Institute in Sofia, in 1989, its director and academician Nikolay Todorov recalled that

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115 See also Nenad Stefanov, "The Secrets of Titograd in 1989: On Entanglements and Fragile Networks between the Intellectuals of West Germany and Socialist Yugoslavia," *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* 50, no. 1 (2014), 68.

116 CSA, f. 1б, a.e. 6431, l. 120.

117 CSA, f. 1б, a.e. 6431, l. 127, 129.

118 "Notă cu privire la unele manifestări științifice internaționale din domeniul științelor sociale și umanistice la care au participati oameni de știință români," 19 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR—Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 6/1966, ff. 27–28. Cited in Bogdan Iacob, "Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation: History-Production in Communist Romania 1955–1966" (PhD dissertation, Central European University, 2011), 397.

> The successful development of Bulgarian Balkanistics proceeded in conditions of intensive foreign policy activity in Bulgaria . . . Bulgarian Balkan studies, in turn, helped to promote our country in the international scientific and cultural community as a peaceful and reliable partner in international life, as a factor in creating a new political and particularly new scientific climate in the peninsula . . .[119]

"The Bulgarian historian is an active political worker," Todorov stated on an earlier occasion. For all intents and purposes, this was not merely a figure of speech.[120]

It would be futile to try to disentangle the domestic and foreign dimensions of this "political work." In one way or another, all those in leading positions in Balkan studies ascribed "profound political meaning" to regional scholarly cooperation. The proliferation of regionalist organizations and the consolidation of Southeast European studies as an autonomous field in the 1960s were products of the Cold War: they brought into focus cultural politics, geopolitics, and the renegotiation of the place of the nation in the bipolar postwar constellation. Each country came with its own political and cultural-diplomacy agenda, and for the various countries the regional project had different weights. The international and symbolic space in which Yugoslavia, for example, positioned itself went far beyond the Balkans: along with Tito's posing as a leader in the global non-alignment movement, his privileged deals with the Western powers considerably diminished the relative importance of the Balkans as a geopolitical playground or cultural proxy for Yugoslavia. (One might even say that were it not for the Macedonian issue, the country would have had even less interest in the area.)[121]

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119 Nikolay Todorov, "Dvadeset i pet godini Institut po balkanistika," *Istoricheski pregled*, no. 8 (1989), 65.

120 Censorship and party control might well be seen as implicated in this notion. In his memoirs, Dimitrije Đorđević, the secretary of the Yugoslav Committee to AIESEE, recounts how he proposed to Nikolay Todorov to write a collaborative paper, later to be joined by Greek, Romanian, and possibly Albanian scholars, on the projects for Balkan federation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Todorov said he would accept but that he first needed the approval of the Central Committee. The approval was not granted, so Đorđević wrote and published his research on the topic separately: Dimitrije Đorđević, *Ožiljci i uspomene*, vol. 3 (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 2000), 185–186.

121 According to Dimitrije Đorđević, the reason for the belated founding of the Balkan Institute in Belgrade was the fact that "the Yugoslav foreign policy neglected Balkan relations in favor of relations with the 'non-aligned' Third World in Asia and Africa." (Đorđević, *Ožiljci i uspomene*, vol. 3, 132). For a somewhat different view, see Bogdan

Behind the programmatic pronouncements of regional commonality, furthermore, the leadership of the Balkan institutes raised serious questions about the direction their research was going to take. The scholars—all of them historians—leading the discipline of Southeastern European studies were at the same time participating substantially in the construction of the grand national narrative of the communist regimes and the mobilization of the "historians' front." For some, this was their primary trade and walk of life—like Vasa Čubrilović (1897–1990), the 1930s author of plans for "mass displacement of Albanians" from Yugoslavia to resolve the "Albanian problem" and a leading national historian after the war, or Aleks Buda (1910–1993), who masterminded an autochthonist and xenophobic view of Albanian history and whom the dictator Enver Hoxha appointed as the founding president of the Albanian Academy. Others, like Nikolay Todorov, whose career also merged high academic and party-political posts, and Mihai Berza (1907–1978), a disciple of the prewar critical school and close collaborator of N. Iorga and Gh. I. Brătianu, joined the postwar rewriting of the national histories of Bulgaria and Romania and later served chiefly as academic managers and brokers in the communist system of planned science. Until 1973 the Thessaloniki-based Institute for Balkan Studies operated as a branch of the Society for Macedonian Studies—an organization whose declared aim, in the words of its president, Konstantinos Vavouskos, was "first and foremost the defense of the national [Greek] positions in Macedonia"[122]—and even after this date, its research and journal maintained its original conservative-nationalist complexion. But there were also differences. Under Berza's leadership the Institute in Bucharest became a place of methodological and theoretical innovation, spearheading the re-introduction of the *Annales* school and the history of ideas and mentalities in Romania.[123] The core structures of the institutes in Albania, Bulgaria,

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Iacob, "Short Guide to Navigating Cold War Balkan Imaginations," *Snodi. Publici e private nella storia contemporana*, vol. 14 (2014), 124.

122 Konstantinos Vavouskos, "Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon (1939–1980)," reproduced in *Anales*, vol. 5, *Meletai Konstantinou An. Vavouskou* (Thessaloniki, 1993), 1499–1500.

123 In 1969 Berza organized a colloquium in Bucharest involving some of the most important members of the third generation of *Annales*: Alphonse Dupront, George Duby, Pierre Chaunu, and François Furet. Berza and Alexandru Duțu (who in the 1980s was editor-in-chief of the *Revue des études Sud-Est Européennes*) were the main promoters of the history of mentalities and civilizations in the frame of Southeast European studies, and the Institute's journal was the main forum for writings in this field. The direction they tried to give to these studies in Romania sought to combine Papacostea's Balkanology, the contemporary *Annales* tradition, and the method of historical materialism (Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, 400–401).

and Greece, despite their declared opening to the world and their comparatist goals, failed to establish dialogue with new foreign currents and disseminate innovations to the broader field of the humanities and the social sciences in these countries.

The degree of enmeshment with the power structures, on the other hand, was proportionate to the relative weight of these institutes both inside their countries and on a regional scale. The institutes in Bucharest, Sofia, and Thessaloniki received far more political attention, were much better politically connected, and accordingly benefited from considerably more financial support and personnel than the institutions in Belgrade, Tirana, or Edirne. A 1976 report by the Bulgarian minister of foreign affairs to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the BCP observed that Romania and Bulgaria were the only Balkan countries with developed Balkan studies.[124]

In the postwar conceptualizations of Southeastern Europe as a historical region and a field of study, several scholars played a key role: the general secretary of the Romanian Commission for UNESCO, literary scholar Tudor Vianu (1898–1964); the first president of AIESEE, medievalist Denis Zakythinos; the director of the Institute for Southeast European Studies in Bucharest and president of AIESEE's Commission for the History of Ideas in Southeastern Europe, medieval historian Mihai Berza; and the general secretary of AIESEE, archaeologist Emil Condurachi (1912–1987).

With a few minor exceptions, the name and the boundaries of the region were not among the openly debated issues. The Association and the institute in Bucharest framed their subject as Southeast European studies, but the institutes in Sofia, Belgrade, Sarajevo, and Thessaloniki defined theirs as "Balkan studies," while in the *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* and other official publications, the region was often named "the Balkans and Southeastern Europe." In the opinion of its first president, Denis Zakythinos, AIESEE was "not a Balkan association . . . It does not want to be a society for 'Balkan studies.'" "A new term," he maintained, "less used and more encompassing, such as that of Southeastern Europe, better suits the novelty of our projects, of our methods, and of our aspirations."[125] To Emil Condurachi the Balkans presented "one whole that, in turn, is part of another, larger one—the Mediterranean and its immediate extensions: the Aegean, Adriatic, and Black Seas."[126] Its cultural diffusion, on the other hand, spread over much greater territory: "the European Southeast

124 CSA, f. 16, op. 66, a. e. 639, l. 55.

125 Denis Zakythinos, "La naissance d'une Association international," *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* 1, nos. 1–2 (1963): 6.

126 Emil Condurachi, "L'AIESEE à son Xe anniversaire—esquisse d'un bilan du passé et de ses perspectives d'avenir," *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* 11, nos. 1–2 (1973): 29.

represents precisely one of those regions whose investigation enriches the cultural history of all Europe, as well as that of northern Africa and of large areas of the Near East and Middle East."[127] This repositioning seems to have been induced by UNESCO's ambition to extend the study area of AIESEE toward the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Northern Africa. From UNESCO's point of view, the Association "has as its objective the study of the Balkan region envisaged as a channel of cultural communication between Mediterranean Europe, the Slavic world, and Asia Minor, which explains its birth and development in the frame of the Major Project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values."[128] Yet the Balkan-Mediterranean regional perspective was never systematically pursued. At the opening of the Third International Congress of Southeast European Studies in Bucharest (1974), Mihai Berza was content to point instead to the "peaceful coexistence of the two terms [the Balkans and Southeastern Europe] in the frame of our Association" and to offer the remarkably enlightened solution,

> . . . to leave Southeastern Europe with open boundaries and, without at all ignoring the problems posed by territory, to start from the phenomena related to man and follow them each time in their entire territorial extension. In this way the Yugoslav, Romanian, or Greek regions could, in certain eras or for certain kinds of phenomena, not be included in our Southeast, whereas in other eras and for other kinds of phenomena, we would see it "annexing" a big part of Hungary or the northern coast of the Black Sea.[129]

In the theoretical and methodological sense, the conceptualization of the Balkans/Southeastern Europe that crystallized through the postwar institutional web and scholarly exchange drew heavily on the premises formulated by the interwar generation of regionalists. Methodologically, it endorsed the indispensability of the multidisciplinary approach and the comparative

127 Emil Condurachi, "Une programme de connaissance et compréhension mutuelles par la coopération scientifique," *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* 1, nos. 1–2 (1963): 7.

128 Moenis Taha-Hussein, "L'UNESCO et l'étude des cultures du Sud-Est européen," *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* 10, no. 1 (1972): 41.

129 Mihai Berza, "Les études du Sud-Est européen, leur rôle et leur place dans l'ensemble des sciences humaines" (opening speech for the Third International Congress of Southeast European Studies, Bucharest, September 4, 1974), *Revue des études Sud-Est Européennes* 13, no. 1 (1975): 6–7.

method.[130] Conceptually, it borrowed wholesale the major tenets of interwar Balkanology concerning the phases of "Balkan aggregation," the succession of ethnic fragmentation and civilizational syntheses, the pre-eminence of the Byzantine and Ottoman legacies, the connection between national and world history, the pre-historical roots and ethnic continuity of the Balkan populations, the Balkan contributions to and the influences—political, cultural, economic—of the West.

Regarding the actual "meaning" of this complex reality, the 1962 colloquium in Sinaia indicated which directions it would evolve in by framing the main themes of research as the "unity and diversity of Balkan civilizations" and "relations between the East and the West through the mediation of the Balkans." At their core lay the meta-ontological binomes of diversity and unity, individuality and synthesis. Diversity and individuality (or "originality"), Tudor Vianu maintained, revoked "homogeneity" and were epitomized by the Balkan nations, each one of which, out of the common source, "selects, interprets, and creates new meanings in accordance with its own particular conditions and with a view to its own genius."[131]

Delving into the same formula, Denis Zakythinos proposed viewing the relationship between unity and diversity as being "governed by oscillating movements from synthesis toward differentiation and vice versa." There might not exist a common Balkan civilization, as some contended, but there did exist civilizational areas (*des aires de civilisation*). The Balkan cultures formed a *sui generis* civilizational area—compact at its center and disintegrating at its peripheries, a "civilizational synthesis created in the framework of large political organizations."[132]

According to D. Zakythinos, not all phenomena that took place within the geographical boundaries of Southeastern Europe were necessarily of interest to the student of the region. "Only facts and phenomena that break off regional, statist, and national boundaries and are extending to a supranational and inter-Balkan area deserve our attention. It follows that, leaving to other disciplines [the study of] the particular (in this case the history of events),

130 See the sophisticated methodological discussion of these approaches in Berza, "Les études du Sud-Est européen," 7–12.

131 Tudor Vianu, "Les régions culturelles dans l'histoire des civilisations et le colloque de civilisations balkaniques," *Actes du Colloque International de Civilisations Balkaniques* (*Sinaia, 8–14 juillet 1962*) (Bucharest: Commission Nationale Roumaine pour l'UNESCO), 13.

132 Denis Zakythinos, "Etat actuel des études du Sud-Est européen (objets, méthodes, sources, instruments de travail, place dans les sciences humaines)," *Actes du II^e Congrès international des études du Sud-Est européen* 1 (Athens: AIESEE, 1972), 11–15.

Southeast European studies orients itself more and more toward the general, toward the structural, the social, the cultural."[133] Mihai Berza's approach to this issue was different. While agreeing that Balkan studies was a "science of synthesis," he insisted on the "permanent interdependence between these two levels of research in the field," as they presented "not two matters but two ways of approaching the analysis of the same matter." "In reality," however, Berza added,

> it is not a question of only two levels, since a third one immediately comes into sight, namely that of universal history, with which Southeast European studies is in relations similar to those established between the first two levels. The task of Southeast European studies is not only to offer its results to universal history in order that the latter, in turn, integrates them in a broader horizon; they are also obliged to courageously hook up with these horizons, to direct their researches towards this end and conduct them in such a spirit. By proceeding in this way . . . they will make, with respect to the national histories, the first step, big and solid, in the ascent towards universal history.[134]

Like Iorga, Berza's main concern was, as he put it, the "universalization of the history of the fatherland," which at the same time would "increase the prestige of our science abroad."[135] To this end he envisaged a twofold procedure. One concerned the area as a whole. First it had to be defined in terms of its distinctive traits that would qualify it as a historically formed entity. Then it needed to be reintegrated into the larger framework of the great currents of civilization through its function as an "intermediary hoop between the East and the West." The other level entailed a similar approach regarding the relationship between the originality of each people's contribution and the unitary character of that which was called Southeastern Europe. The comparative method of research therefore had to be equally attentive to both the "unity" and the "diversity." This dual integration "which, however, preserves its originality" was a necessary step leading to universal history.[136]

The notion of unity and diversity—a notion that, as we saw, was central to the interwar generation of Balkan researchers—and its methodological

133 Zakythinos, "Etat actuel des études du Sud-Est européen," 18–19.

134 Berza, "Les études du Sud-Est européen," 6, 12.

135 Mihai Berza, "Cercetările de istorie universală în URSS," *Studii. Revistă de istorie* 15, no. 5 (1962): 1263.

136 Berza, "L'AIESEE et la collaboration scientifique internationale," 9.

corollary, the relationship between the national, the regional, and the global scale, held a dual potential. It was meant to endorse the originality of the national cultures and undo the established image of the Balkans as alien to (European) civilization. Indeed, to the extent that one can speak of a common ideology behind the Southeast European project, above and beyond discrete national schemes, it was the aspiration to highlight the universal contribution of the individual Balkan nations through the mediation of Southeast European cultural/historical heritage. In the words of Emil Condurachi, "The research in this area represents an essential condition for highlighting before the entire world the contribution that the peoples of Southeastern Europe brought to the treasury of universal culture."[137]

This was a convenient formula in several ways. It provided a venue for the high international visibility and de-provincialization of the national by inscribing it into a larger regional narrative. It sought to assert a modicum of sovereignty in a hegemonistic world and a distinctive Balkan Europeanness. It granted access to cultural universalism and to a specific modern mission. It was a formula Europe itself identified with. It also allowed for operating on different registers depending on circumstances and audiences: particularistic (nationalistic) and regionalist (universalistic).

The Balkan scholars' preoccupation with "origin" and "continuity"—national as well as regional—was another common thread between the pre- and post-war conceptualizations of the field. The founding document of AIESEE set the task of promoting the study of Southeastern Europe "from the most distant times to the present," whereas in their programmatic pronouncements, Berza and Condurachi used to stress the "long ethnic continuity," starting with the Bronze and the Iron Ages, which lay at the basis of the ethnogenesis of the Balkan peoples.[138] Several international symposia, organized by AIESEE and devoted to the "Archaeological Sources of European Civilization" (Mamaia, Romania, 1967), "The Ethnogenesis of the Balkan Peoples" (Plovdiv, Bulgaria, 1969) and "Illyrian Studies" (Tirana, 1972), dealt with these issues. AIESEE also became the patron of the first International Congress in Thracian Studies (Sofia, 1972).

The "vitality of the Byzantine, Byzantino-Slavic and Byzantino-Romanian traditions" and the *état d'esprit* which they nurtured were generally credited

137 Emil Condurachi, "Une programme de connaissance et compréhension mutuelles," 8.

138 Mihai Berza, "Les grandes étapes de l'histoire du Sud-Est européen," in AIESEE, *Tradition et innovation dans la culture des pays du Sud-Est européen* (Actes du colloque tenu les 11 et 12 septembre à Bucarest à l'occasion de la IX^{e} Assemblée Générale du CIPSH) (Bucharest, 1969), 9–26; Condurachi, "L'AIESEE à son X^{e} anniversaire," 27–39.

for having conferred some of the most characteristic features of the European Southeast.[139] In contrast, the terminological opacity regarding the nature of society within the Ottoman political organization is revealing. The relations between the dominant Muslim majority and the subjugated Christian minority were defined variously in terms of "imperial contributions" and "strong influences" (Zakythinos), "*un air de famille*" (Berza), or most generically, as partaking in the "Balkan (civilizational) synthesis." On the whole, the Ottoman period of the Balkan past remained in the no-man's-land between imperial unity and cultural diversity, trying to strike a delicate balance between Balkanistic élan and national sensitivities. Berza attempted to find a middle way by calling for "abandoning the schematic vision of two superimposed and exclusively antagonistic societies in order to study the numerous zones of permeability between the Ottoman and Islamic society and the Christian society of the Balkans."[140] Others, however, openly questioned the idea—and the possibility—of permeability. The eminent Hungarian historian of early modern Eastern Europe József Perényi (1915–1981), for example, spoke of a "duality of Balkan civilizations as a consequence of the duality of the societies that produced these civilizations." While there certainly existed "reciprocal influences between Turkish civilization and Balkan civilization . . . conquerors and conquered generally did not mix with each other. They constituted two distinct societies that were superimposed."[141] The vice-president of AIESEE, Turkish historian Halil Inalcik (1916–2016), declared it necessary "to admit that the Turks constituted an integral part of the Balkan peoples and cultures, just like other peoples and cultures considered native."[142] His colleague Ilber Ortalyi voiced the suspicion that users of the term "Southeastern Europe" were covertly attempting to minimize the role of the Ottoman Empire in the region.[143] On the level of research, dissension was much more pronounced. While Turkish historians assumed the viewpoint of the imperial center, their peers' interest in the region was restricted to their own nations. The latter focused overwhelmingly on the unabating national resistance, revolutionary struggles, national resurgence, and liberation movements and stressed the insurmountable

139 Condurachi, "L'AIESEE à son Xe anniversaire," 33–34.

140 Mihai Berza, "L'AIESEE et la collaboration scientifique internationale dans l'étude du Sud-Est européen," *Revue des études Sud-Est européen* 12, no. 1 (1974): 14.

141 Joseph Perenyi, "Quelques aspects de la coexistence des civilisations balkaniques du XV[e] au XVIII[e] siècles," in *Actes du Colloque International de Civilisations Balkaniques*, 99–103.

142 *Actes du IIe Congrès International*, 20.

143 Ilber Ortalyi, "Les Balkans et l'héritage ottoman," *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* 28–29 (1998–1999), 214.

differences between the local population and the Ottoman invaders, the complete alienation of the enslaved Balkan peoples, and the preservation of their "national" consciousness during the "dark ages" of foreign rule. The theoretically acknowledged civilizational permeation notwithstanding, the Ottoman contribution to the Balkan synthesis remained an intensely contested issue.

The truly salient and pervasive theme that connected all these discussions was the relations and comparison with "Europe." The historical and cultural credentials of the region with respect to Europe were, on the one hand, many and strong, and they were invoked all too often. At the same time the region had major problems with its European identity, and they transpired in various ways. Sometimes this was stated openly:

> We often talk about the Europeanization of Southeastern—or Eastern—Europe as one of the important phenomena of the last centuries. . . . Our ancestors from the late eighteenth or the early nineteenth century wanted to become, to be European. But they were, even if they did not know it. Because there were two Europes, well before there was only one, one explicit, which thought of itself as such and whose borders were expanding, and another one, implicit, whose borders, at least since the Middle Ages. . . . have been more or less those of its geographical limits.[144]

The Balkans was part of geographical Europe but not of self-conscious Europe—an anomaly and aberration that resulted from a kind of "aristocratic Eurocentrism" and which Southeast-Europeanists were entitled to rectify. In 1974 M. Berza boasted of the "huge progress" that Balkan studies had made and which, "in the wake of previous attempts to forsake the old Eurocentrism, has resulted in an auspicious 'de-aristocratization' of history."[145] Let us look more closely into what this was supposed to mean.

The very idea of the Balkans and Southeastern Europe, as it evolved in the 1960s and 1970s, pursued not mere identification with Europe but a distinctive role within it by carving out an intermediary, or more properly "integrative," space in between East and West. Balkan unity and civilizational synthesis, Tudor Vianu maintained, were European in cultural morphology; yet they were neither Western nor Eastern but endowed with "the special vocation of facilitating the mutual understanding between East and West." This vocation, he contended, was ever more germane in a world deeply divided between post-colonials and colonizers. With "their ancient cultural heritage and large

144 Berza, "Les études du Sud-Est européen," 13.

145 Ibid., 14.

human horizon," Balkan civilizations were "especially called on to bridge the deep fissure and heal one of the wounds of the world."[146] The ensuing drive to count the Balkans as the irreplaceable basis of European civilization, indeed of the idea of Europe itself, was obvious, as was the danger of relapsing into hypertrophied essentialism and protochronism.

For some, however, the Balkans itself was "one of the wounds of the world," inflicted by Western and Eastern imperialism but staunchly heading towards its emancipation. Aleks Buda repeated almost word for word the tirades of the interwar Yugoslav Balkanologists when stating that the theories about the Balkans as lands of barbarians, with no proper culture, and caught in incessant fighting "sought to justify the aggression and the expansion coming from both East and West at the expense of the Balkan peoples." History, however, had disproved these theories: it "had shown that the Balkan peoples could attain a 'political unity' and 'peace,' that they could move towards progress free of foreign domination and not merging with any of the 'world' empires."[147]

The notion of the Balkans as the prey of the imperialist powers had a long local tradition, which culminated in the 1930s with the convergence of communist and liberal discourses on the call for "The Balkans to the Balkan peoples." An impressive number of studies, focused on particular countries and periods from the perspective of either international relations or discrete economic sectors, which appeared in the 1960s and especially the 1970s under the rubric "the Balkans and the great European powers," added prodigiously to this tradition. This kind of literature often enmeshed national and regional perspectives: in his above-quoted invective, for example, Aleks Buda directly projected the self-victimizing and autarkic Albanian national discourse onto the regional one.

As in the interwar period, most of these themes openly evoked or implied the notion of backwardness as a determining regional notion. In the 1960s and 1970s it went hand in hand with another meta-concept—that of modernization or Europeanization, and a cluster of related concepts like (the transition to or penetration of) capitalism, synchronicity/asynchronicity, delay, catching-up,

146 Tudor Vianu, "Les régions culturelles dans l'histoire des civilisations et le colloque de civilisations balkaniques," in *Actes du Colloque International de Civilisations Balkaniques* (*Sinaia, 8–14 juillet 1962*) (Bucharest: Commission Nationale Roumaine pour l'UNESCO), 11–14.

147 Aleks Buda, "Unité et diversité dans l'histoire du peuple albanais et des autres peuples balkanique," in *Actes du Colloque International de Civilisations Balkanique*, 57. Buda was no less defiant towards foreign theories and trends in cultural studies, which he decried as "capitalist and revisionist": Armanda Hysa, "Ethnography in Communist Albania: Nationalist Discourse and Relations with History," in *Historični seminar 8*, eds. Katarina Keber and Luka Vidmar (Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2010), 120.

and industrial revolution/industrialization. Yet few studies directly tackled and sought to unravel the utility of the notion of modernization for the Balkans. Several of them appeared in the volume *La révolution industrielle dans le Sud-Est européen—19 c.*, presenting the proceedings of a colloquium organized by the AIESEE Commission for Social and Economic History and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft in Hamburg in 1976.

There was no divergence among the authors on the "considerable qualitative and quantitative delay in the development of the Continent's East and Southeast compared to its West." Two main factors caused this delay: the Turks and the West. The Marxist position "improved" on the nationalist one in treating the Ottoman Empire as having hindered not only the natural evolution of the organic nation but also the latter's "progress" and modernization. In the words of Romanian historian Valentin Georgescu (1908–1995), "The European-type achievements of the new nations (Bulgarians, Serbs, Romanians) were blocked, altered, or annihilated by Ottoman domination. . . . The 'imperial' modernization of the Ottoman state . . . also proved to be a utopia."[148] In the same vein Nikolay Todorov emphasized the "incompatibility between, on the one hand, the economic system and the state structure of the Ottoman Empire and, in general, of the Muslim world, and, on the other hand, capitalist production." He held that, unlike the Christians, the Muslim societies and the Ottoman Empire in particular had failed to generate a capitalist system of production prior to their encounter with the economic expansion of the West. At the same time, Todorov blamed the economic penetration of European capitalism in the Ottoman Empire for having "prevented the spontaneous processes of creating capitalist enterprises to become amplified to the point of forming a capitalist sector in the economy of the [Bulgarian] lands."[149]

The inconsistency stemmed from an attempt to combine several disparate arguments. One was the intrinsically "anti-capitalist" character of the Ottoman sociopolitical structure. Another was the inherent necessity of the Marxist analysis to demonstrate that modernization as expressed in its two main forms—the nation-state and capitalism—was not just Western influence but

148 Valentin Georgescu, "La terminologie: modernisation et européanisation de l'Empire Ottoman et du Sud-Est de l'Europe à la lumière de l'expérience roumaine," in *La révolution industrielle dans le Sud-Est européen—19 s.* (Sofia: Institut d'études balkaniques, Musée national polytechnique, n.d.), 120–121.

149 Todorov, "La révolution industrielle," 142–143. One may also note the anachronistic usage of terms like "Bulgaria" or "Bulgarian lands [or territories]" for the period prior to the establishment of the Bulgarian state. This kind of anachronism is typical of all national historical narratives in the region.

"an objective socioeconomic process." Bulgarian historian Maria Todorova (b. 1949) advocated the term "Europeanization" as historically more relevant yet believed it obscured "the idea of *spontaneousness* of the internal processes." It was almost impossible, she argued, to disentangle "spontaneous" processes from those provoked by Western influence, but it was essential to stress "the fact that these processes were developing according to a logic intrinsic to the own development of these societies. It is this *internal natural* development that made these societies receptive to outside influence."[150] The third was that the Ottoman state and the newly liberated Balkan states alike were trying to pursue their modernization "while suffering from the semi-colonial exploitation by the capital of the industrialized powers and the resulting hazards of the decisive role that the West played in the process of modernization."[151] It thus follows, first, that capitalist development was incompatible with the socio-political structures of the Ottoman Empire and, second, that the "natural internal" development of the Balkan societies towards modernity and the "outside influence" of European capitalism, far from fostering each other, operated in two opposite directions. Next to "the Turks," the West hindered "progress" in that it "profited from its superiority in order to reduce not only distant countries but whole continents to the state of colonies or semi-colonies."[152]

Significantly, the debate on Balkan modernization and "industrial revolution" made no reference to, and consequently did not enter into dialogue with, the sophisticated discussions taking place, since the late 1950s, in other Marxist historiographies, especially the Hungarian and Polish ones, on the peculiarities and stages of the "bourgeois transformations" and capitalist development in Eastern Europe, where the Balkans was treated as a specific sub-region. This disjuncture (or neglect) deserves more attention than it can be given here, but it is worth pointing out that the "Balkanists" and the "Eastern Europeanists" came to divergent conclusions about the specifics of Balkan capitalist transformation concerning the extent to which the Ottoman conquest could be held responsible for the "backwardness" of the region, a peculiar "Balkan road of capitalist development," the role of Western capitalism, and the responsibilities of the local governments.[153]

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150 Maria Todorova, "The Europeanization of the Ruling Elite of the Ottoman Empire during the Period of Reforms," in *La révolution industrielle dans le Sud-Est européen*, 105. At that time Todorova was still working in Bulgaria.

151 Georgescu, "La terminologie: modernisation et européanisation," 121.

152 Todorov, "La révolution industrielle," 143–144.

153 Emil Niederhauser, *Eastern Europe in Recent Hungarian Historiography* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975), 6–7; Emil Niederhauser, "The Problems of Bourgeois

Moreover, despite the critique of the impact of Western capitalism, the vast majority of studies dealing with the Balkan societies' modernization/Europeanization sought to find out which of the "natural" preconditions for capitalist development or industrialization were obtainable in the Balkans, and to what extent. Unlike their predecessors and a number of contemporary Marxist historians in Central Europe, who advanced the proposition that "the Eastern European countries could not attain modern economic growth by the same path as their Western and Central European predecessors,"[154] the postwar Balkanists made no attempt at devising a "Balkan" way to modernity. (One could, of course, encounter statements to the effect that historically social progress was "not the process of Westernization, but a process of a progressive historic development, which according to natural laws, leads to socialism," but such hackneyed jargon was usually avoided.[155]) In this, paradoxically, the regional Marxist students of Balkan Europeanization stood much closer to the teleological Western-centric ideology of the "modernization theory" than to its neo-Marxist and world-system critics.

The Balkan/Southeast European institutes were contemplated, and were often presented, as intrinsically multidisciplinary bodies; in practice, history heavily prevailed in all of them. However, historians generally proved least capable (or willing) to surpass their nationally-bounded viewpoint and deploy the transnational or comparative methodology intrinsic to the field. Considering the abundance of institutional venues to foster research on Southeast Europe—specialized institutes, international associations, conferences and congresses—the scarcity of more comprehensive regional studies is striking. A great discrepancy appears between organizational and institutional investment versus actual achievement. It is matched by a conspicuous chasm between conceptualizations of and methodological precepts for the study of the field versus the actual state of Balkanistic research.

The bulk of historical studies were only nominally Southeast European in that they concerned groups and states that were located in the area but whose commonalities were rarely tested. The overwhelming preoccupation

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Transformation in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe," in *Nouvelles Etudes Historiques*, vol. 1 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1965), 565–580; József Perényi, "L'Est Européen dans une synthèse d'histoire universelle," in *Nouvelles Etudes Historiques*, vol. 2 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1965), 379–405.

154 E. Pamlenyi, ed., *Social-Economic Researches on the History of East-Central Europe* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970).

155 Bulgarian historian Voin Božinov in a comment on William McNeill's paper delivered at the first congress, *Actes du Premier Congrès*, vol. 5, 396.

of local historians with particular international issues, events, and themes deemed crucial within individual national frameworks of reference outlined a field where the scale was not (mono-)national but the methodology and the vantage points definitely were. It was common to offer selective Bulgarian, Serbian, or Romanian perspectives on the Byzantine Empire or to parcel the study of the Ottoman Empire into "Bulgarian," "Serbian," or "Greek" lands. The study of interaction of various kinds assumed unquestionably the provision that the actors involved were *a priori* existing, fixed and well-bounded ethnic collectivities. Cross-national relations and exchanges were usually dealt with on a bilateral basis, with scholars tending to stress specific aspects of the "common Balkanness/Southeast Europeanness" in which "their" nation could claim a special contribution. These were the "Byzantine synthesis" and the Greek influence in the Ottoman Empire in the Greek case; the Daco-Roman substratum and the post-Byzantine heritage in the Romanian case; the "Byzantino-Slavic" tradition, South Slav solidarity, and national-liberation movements in the Bulgarian and Yugoslav cases; the unifying power and "benevolent" rule of the Ottoman Empire in the Turkish case; and the Illyrian roots and again the national movement in the Albanian case. Titles referring to "common features," "the Balkans," or "Southeastern Europe" frequently introduced studies of single national cases or extrapolated the findings on one such case onto the whole region—particularly in studies of the period from the eighteenth century onwards.[156]

The discourse of diversity in identity, generally speaking, appears to have served as a license to emphasize the precedence of a particular national achievement as prefigured in the respective national master narrative. Contrary to what one might expect, international Balkan congresses and conferences were not places where inflated national self-promotion was censured. Most of the time, they served as places for showcasing the latest developments in validating the fundamental assumptions on which the national historical canons were built. After the mid-1970s open confrontations between national "historical truths" were not censored and the congresses increasingly turned

156 The excuse Todorov gave at the first congress for the "insurmountable obstacles" that had precluded the presentation of a coherent plenary report on the modern and contemporary history of the Balkan peoples was "the insufficiency of comparative research in the sphere of modern and contemporary history" (*Actes du Premier Congres*, vol. 3, 8). The situation at the second international congress four years later was similar: of the thirteen Greek contributions to Volume 3 of the proceedings of the congress, devoted to Ottoman and post-Ottoman history until World War I, only one was on a topic that did not focus solely on the national Greek case.

into international venues for reinstating the national narratives and a scene for staging nationalist fights. Keynote or plenary pronouncements on behalf of regionally oriented research consistently avoided engaging with critiques of the assumptions and convictions underlying the concepts of national sciences. It is not surprising that the "regional approach" did not affect the writing of national history, which remained a self-contained, didactic, and parochial field. The evidence of the political value—or rather political instrumentalization—of the Southeast European project was already discussed above. But the evidence of the value of these contacts in solving, or at least attenuating, long-burning academic disagreements, in a context intended to "outdo the age of nationalist or doctrinaire historicism," as Zakythinos put it, is not positive either. Rather than encouraging scholarly dialogue and the free exchange of critical opinions, the presidents of the AIESEE commissions and committees saw themselves as presiding over diplomatic meetings between warring parties.

In fact, it can be said that communication and exchange within the field of Southeast European studies were made possible precisely by the consensually shared national framework of history-writing, notwithstanding the acceptance in theory of the epistemological alternative that the field presented. Such a consensus also made possible scholarly communication across the Iron Curtain in this (and other) areas of academic research. While Balkan scholars sought to gain international visibility and recognition for their versions of history, their Western colleagues readily assumed the role of "disinterested brokers" and "unbiased synthesizers," professing strictly empirical methods, while often favoring one master narrative over another and endorsing the nation-state as the legitimate agency of history. This explains the seeming paradox of no explicit ideological antagonism emerging between authors from Germany, the Soviet bloc, Yugoslavia, and Greece, as well as political émigrés from the socialist states, on the pages of journals like *Südost-Forschungen*, for example. Its editors actually boasted of the "peaceful coexistence" of contributors from different "camps," which they presented as indicating adherence to solely "scientific quality" and "strictly scientific criteria." In effect, the "peace" was the result of the negative criterion of neither side putting the national paradigm—and the "truth" it taught—under critical scrutiny.[157] On the contrary, the *Southeastern Europe Journal* in the United States regularly published thematic issues devoted to key national anniversaries featuring the diehards of the Balkan national historiographies.

157 On the conditions that made possible the postwar German-Yugoslav academic interactions on such a basis, see the useful article by Stefanov, "The Secrets of Titograd in 1989," 67.

Just as before the war, the competition to get external authorities to validate "the historical truth" remained central to the politics of history-writing. The framework for this competition was set by UNESCO itself, with its promotion of national genius, the individuality of cultures, and national paths to development and modernity.[158] Perhaps the most important transnational dimension in all this was least pursued: the national narratives continued to be shaped in and through confrontation with (and contestation by) other national narratives and negotiation with the "Western brokers." The ultimate result of this transnational process was, however, the reconfirmation and, indeed, reinforcement of the frontiers within the Balkans itself.

The "historical Balkans" was, consequently, conceived mainly in national terms, whereby the region featured as a mosaic of more or less homogeneous national spaces, notwithstanding its long-term incorporation in various imperial frames. Unlike interwar Balkanology, its postwar continuation never went as far as to interrogate the basic theoretical premise of the discipline: the construction of boundaries per se. National or ethnic borderlines could be and were thematized as points of contention among national ideologies, but their status as the key dividing lines in the Balkans was never seriously challenged. In this regard the regional and extraregional "Balkanist" approaches to explaining Balkan historical dynamics were in full agreement. The type of "regional history" that concentrated on bilateral relations, mutual influences, common struggles, and regional foreign-policy or security developments not only infused the historicist tradition of historical writing with a long afterlife but, ironically, enhanced an abiding Western academic tradition of seeing Balkan history as one of incessant mutinies, wars, international crises, and hostilities.

As before, "softer" disciplinary fields and subfields like linguistics, ethnography, cultural and literary history, classical archaeology, and the history of ideas or religion fared better in terms of more integrative visions and comparatist research. Communication in these areas with fruitful developments outside of the region (e.g., the history of mentalities, anthropology, cultural history, Byzantine studies) was productive in fleshing out a "Balkan cultural space" marked by a variety of "cultural Balkanisms."[159] Other historical subfields fared worse. The methodological advances in social and economic history in the rest

158 Iacob, "Short Guide to Navigating Cold War Balkan Imaginations," 129.

159 See, for example, Adrian Fochi, *Recherches comparées de folklore sud-est européen* (Bucharest: AIESEE, 1972); Alexandru Duţu, *Romanian Humanists and European Culture: A Contribution to Comparative and Cultural History* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1977); Stoyan Djoudjeff, "Problèmes généraux du folklore balkanique," in *Actes du Deuxième Congrès International des études su Sud-Est européen*, vol. 1 (Athens: AIESEE, 1972), 491–511.

of Europe and the imposition of Marxist methodology in much of the region failed to yield socioeconomic "syntheses" of the area—a strange absence, considering both the burgeoning neo-Marxist comparatist approaches from the 1960s to the 1980s and the strong preoccupation with the region's economic unity before the war. Since the mid-1970s, furthermore, nationalist discourses in all of these states had been growing increasingly radicalized—self-centered and xenophobic.[160] The mythopoetic and conceptual attraction of the Balkans, harking back to interwar Balkanology, entered into decline and was sustained primarily by personal networks and routine.

During its heyday in the 1960s and 1970s, the Balkan project, just like its interwar predecessor, was more of an ideology and a political stance than a research agenda or a methodology. Its inherent contradictions came mainly from the merging of functions and agendas. It was both an outlet to the global scene—an aspiration to belong and contribute to the larger world—and a stage for "performing" the nationally parochial. It was both an attempt at individual and collective emancipation and an exercise in auto-censorship. It was a space both of subversive cultural intimacy among peers and of demonstrating loyalty to the centers of power. On the whole, the chances for autonomous intellectual practice that the project offered were lost because the participating scholars understood themselves to be spokesmen of the national collectivities—a self-understanding appreciated and often remunerated by academic and political power structures at home. From the late 1970s the Balkan project began to wane, increasingly giving way to outright national propaganda that fell on receptive ears in both East and West.

Between Eastern Europe and the Balkans—Southeast European Studies Abroad

The studies of the Balkans and Southeastern Europe outside of the region after the war are a burgeoning field that cannot be fully covered here. The final part of this essay will, therefore, sketch only the general directions of this

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Cf. Dagmar Burkhart, *Kulturraum Balkan* (Berlin and Hamburg: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1989).

160 On this trend in Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia, see, respectively, Ivan Elenkov, *Kulturniyat front* (Sofia: Institut za izsledvane na blizkoto minalo, 2008); Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceauşescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Nenad Stefanov, *Wissenschaft als nationaler Beruf: die Serbische Akademie der Wissenschaften 1944–1992: Tradierung und Modifizierung nationaler Ideologie* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011).

research in order to shed light on the overall scholarly environment and suggest certain links, or the lack of links, to the local conceptualizations.

Elsewhere in Eastern Europe until at least the early 1970s, the Balkans and Southeastern Europe were largely superseded as meaningful references in scholarly literature other than physical geography. On the occasion of the first congress in Sofia in 1966, the head of the Soviet delegation, Anatoliy F. Miller, assessed the state of the field in the Soviet Union: "The actual achievements of Soviet Balkanistics are still very modest. Works on encompassing Balkan themes are almost absent in our country."[161] The institutionalization of Balkan studies in the Soviet Union began only in the 1960s. In 1968 the Institute of Slavic Studies was transformed into an Institute of Slavic and Balkan Studies, which became the main research and coordinating center of Balkan studies in the Soviet Union.[162] The first twenty years of the Institute's work were dominated by country-based research (*stranovedcheskie issledovaniya*). It produced a number of monographs on particular countries as well as national (usually two- or three-volume) histories from antiquity to contemporary times, fusing national and Marxist-Leninist teleology.[163] The Balkans as a discrete historical space was largely subsumed under two other overarching geographies: the (South) Slavic world and the socialist "Central and Southeastern Europe." Paramount among the comparative-historical themes purportedly delineating a "Central- and Southeast European region"—typically in collective works bringing together several national cases—were the "ethnogenesis and ethnic history," "transition from feudalism to capitalism in Central and Southeastern Europe," nation formation, the building of socialism, and "the formation of Marxist aesthetics and the theory of socialist realism."[164] Parallel to these, a

161 A.F. Miller, "Balkanistika: problemy i perspektivy (Kongres v Sofii)," *Vesnik AN SSSR* 12 (1966): 67.

162 T.A. Pokivailova and O.V. Sokolovskaya, "Stanovlenie balkanistiki v SSSR (izuchenie istorii balkanskih stran)," in *Materialyi k VI mezhdunarodnomu kongressu po izucheniyu stran Iyugo-Vostochnoy Evropy* (*Sofia, avgust 1989*) (Moscow: Institut slavyanovedeniya i balkanistiki AN SSSR, 1989), 163–164. Since 1974 the institute's official journal, *Balkanskie issledovaniya* (Balkan Studies), had featured eighteen collective volumes mainly discussing Russia/the Soviet Union's political and cultural role in the region.

163 N.S. Derzhavin, *History of Bulgaria* (1945–1948, 4 vols.); G.L. Arsh, I.G. Senkevich, and N.D. Smirnova, *History of Bulgaria* (1954–1955, 2 vols.); *History of Yugoslavia* (1963, 2 vols.); *A Short History of Albania* (1965); *History of Romania* (1971, 2 vols.); *History of Hungary* (1971, 2 vols.).

164 See the contributions of V.N. Vinogradov (Institute of Slavic and Balkan Studies) and S.S. Hromov (Institute of History of USSR) to *Conférence internationale des balkanologues* (*Belgrade, 7–8 septembre 1982*) (Belgrade: Institut des études balkaniques, 1984), 95–109.

series of monographs or collective works appeared in the 1960s and 1970s, examining Russia's political and military involvement in the "Balkan Question." They formed a particular bulky genre under the rubric "*Rossiya i Balkany*," even if most of it concerned bilateral relations. Next to the traditional fields of ethnography and linguistics, the studies devoted to Russia's Balkan policy rendered the most consistent vision of the Balkans as an entity in the Soviet scholarly literature after the war, different from "Central and Southeastern Europe" or the "Slavs."[165]

In the other socialist countries the study of the region was usually subsumed under another spatial category—East Central Europe. On the whole, in Central Europe after 1945, there were two trends offering a non-nationalist and regionally anchored historical vision: one stressing common or comparable historical experiences of nation-formation, the other based on common or comparable patterns of socioeconomic modernization. Hungarian academics, especially historians, were at the forefront of comparative studies as early as the late 1950s. Among the most sophisticated were Emil Niederhauser's studies of national-revivalist movements within East Central Europe.[166] Ivan Berend and Gyorgy Ranki's *Economic Development in East-Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (1974) discussed the peculiarities in the genesis and development of capitalism across this vast region, while their *The European Periphery and Industrialization 1780–1914* (1982) sought to establish a typology of the Industrial Revolution in three nineteenth-century peripheries: Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, and Scandinavia. The Balkans, in this scheme, constituted a separate sub-category defined by belated, sluggish, and halfway industrialization compared to the other peripheries before World War I. As for the Czech research on the region, since after World War I it traditionally gravitated towards two major themes: the ancient and medieval history of the Balkan Slavs, and the Slav-Byzantine and the Czech-Byzantine cultural and political relations.

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165 For a discussion of the literature in this subfield, see S.I. Bochkareva and E.K.Vyazemskaya, "Rossiya i Balkanyi v XVIII—nachale XX v.," in *Institut slavyanovedeniya i balkanistiki 1947–1977*, 41–79. On the studies of Balkan ethnography and linguistics in the USSR, see Yu. V. Ivanova, "Balkanskaya etnografiya v SSSR," and T.V. Tsiv'yan, "Lingvisticheskaya balkanistika v SSSR," in *Osnovnye problemy balkanistiki v SSSR* (Balkanskie issledovaniya 5) (Moscow: Nauka, 1979), 164–184, 208–221.

166 Emil Niederhauser, "Zur Frage der osteuropäischen Entwicklung," *Studia Slavica* 4 (1958), 359–371; Emil Niederhauser, *A nemzeti megújulási mozgalmak Kelet-Európában* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977) (abridged English edition: *The Rise of Nationality in Eastern Europe* [Budapest, 1982]).

Across Western Europe and the United States, "Slavic" and "East European" institutes proliferated after 1945, especially starting in the mid-1950s. But the change in the political status of the Balkans impacted the academic practices differently in different countries. In the United States, where there was practically no tradition of studying the region outside the realm of international relations, political considerations and defense concerns dominated the field until the 1960s, generating pressure on academics to provide information for policy analysis.[167] Anglo-American scholarly literature during that period was perhaps most strongly affected by the overriding East-West political divide, which led to a radical reshuffling of the map of the region and the omission of Greece and Turkey. The area became subsumed in another term and another scholarly paradigm—Eastern Europe as coterminous with the Soviet/communist bloc. Underlying this remapping was the leveling effect of "Sovietization," whereby the countries in the area were regarded not as important in themselves or autonomous but as an appendage of Soviet studies.

Admittedly, "the Balkans" and "Southeastern Europe" did not die out altogether. In the usage of British and especially American political scientists, international-relations and area-studies experts and even historians in the 1950s and 1960s, the area connoted a "sensitive spot in the complex of relations with the Soviet Union" and was frequently advertised as a "prototype" for the developing countries in Asia and Africa.[168] Until the 1970s, Balkan studies was developed through the activities of the centers for Russian and East European studies, with the largest proportion of funds going to projects dealing with the non-Balkan areas.[169] On the whole, research was historical and country-based, focusing mainly on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and privileging topics like nationalism, national-liberation movements, and diplomatic history.[170] The one *oeuvre de synthese* until the 1980s was Leften

167 See, among many others, Stephen D. Kertész, ed., *The Fate of East Central Europe: Hopes and Failures of American Foreign Policy* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1956).

168 Robert Lee Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Time* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956).

169 Irwin T. Sanders, "Comments on Study of Southeastern Europe in the United States," *Bulletin de l'AIESEE* 13–14 (1975–1976): 5–7.

170 Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The Balkans: The Modern Nations in Historical Perspectives* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1965); Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804–1920* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1977). For an overview of this scholarly production, see Fischer-Galați, "Recent American Scholarship on the History of South-Eastern Europe," *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes* 2, nos. 1–2 (1964), 263–271.

Stavrianos's *The Balkans since 1453*, the first consequential survey of Balkan history in English.[171]

Geopolitics aside, the overall intellectual climate of the 1950s and most of the 1960s was not conducive to treating the Balkans as a distinct cultural-historical area. The postwar notions of development and modernity, as inculcated by mainstream development economics and modernization theory, were inimical to cultural or history-made specificities. Even if no comprehensive attempts were made to reinterpret the notion of the Balkans in terms of the modernization theory, it was this theory's propositions that informed the 1950s and 1960s American writings on various aspects of the region's past and present. The guiding interest thereof concerned the question of whether the stages of Balkan reaction to modern Western European civilization had parallels in the contemporary Third World.[172] In the diachronic perspective of development economics and modernization theory, as a matter of fact, all of Eastern Europe appeared as "agrarian Europe" and a prototype for the contemporary Third World. "The study of the East European economy," wrote the British economic historian Doreen Warriner, "has now acquired an interest going beyond the study of the region itself; its outstanding features are seen to be characteristic of large regions in Asia and the Middle East. Eastern Europe has thus come to be regarded as a prototype for the study of backward areas in general."[173] An East European Studies consortium, set up by three major U.S. universities—Harvard, Boston, and Brown—organized, between 1972 and 1975, ten conferences devoted to the "East European peasantry." The resulting proceedings and related documentation were published in seventy-seven volumes.[174] Generally speaking, the underlying approach to this whole area was informed by the notion of a "laboratory": "a unique political, social, and economic laboratory," "a testing ground for the competing principles of socialism and capitalism," "a unique laboratory for the study of varying contemporary political and

171 Leften S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1958). See also Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, eds., *The Balkans in Transition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963).

172 Two short texts, which address the issue directly, illustrate the interpretation of the Balkans from this perspective: Cyril Black, "Russia and the Modernization of the Balkans," in *The Balkans in Transition*, eds. Jelavich and Jelavich, 145–183; William McNeill, "The Value of Balkan Studies for Comparative History," *Actes du Premiere Congrès International des Etudes Balkaniques et Sud-Est Européennes*, vol. 5 (Sofia: AIESEE, 1970), 385–394.

173 Doreen Warriner, "Some Controversial Issues in the History of Agrarian Europe," *Slavonic and East European Review* 32 (1953): 168–169.

174 See the bibliography in *East European Peasantries: Social Relations; An Annotated Bibliography* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1976).

economic theories."[175] What distinguished the Balkans within this perspective was the thematic fixations—by scholars from inside and outside the region—on a selective range of topics, such as the history of the Eastern Question, regional great-power rivalries, and the origins of World War I, which endorsed a vision of a fixed, problematic geopolitical space with a muddled past, thus reinforcing its strangeness and marginality.[176]

The thesis of the Eastern European socioeconomic and cultural/political *Sonderweg* vis-à-vis the West, captured by the notions of backwardness (and specificities of) nation-building, was approached from both liberal and neo-Marxist positions in the following terms: a small peasant-nation region between Germany and Russia (Hugh Seton-Watson), top-down modernization and catching-up industrialization (Alexander Gerschenkron), dependency and core-(semi-)periphery theory (Immanuel Wallerstein), a quasi-colonial situation and peripheral modernization (Andrew C. Janos and Daniel Chirot).[177] The 1970s and 1980s saw the rise of a rigorously comparative and transnational structural and economic (or economic-sociological) approach to communality, whereby a number of wide-ranging synthetic studies in economic history appeared, occasionally involving cross-regional comparisons.[178] The impact of this burgeoning literature in the Balkans was, as we have seen, negligible.

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175 Charles Jelavich, ed., *Language and Area Studies: East Central and Southeastern Europe: A Survey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), ix–xi. See also Paul Horecki, *Southeastern Europe: A Guide to Basic Publications* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).

176 Charles Jelavich, *Tsarist Russia and Balkan Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958); Edward C. Thaden, *Russia and the Balkan Alliance of 1912* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965); Joachim Remack, *Sarajevo: The Story of a Political Murder* (New York: Criterion Books, 1959); M.S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774–1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1966); Huey Louis Kostanick, "The Geopolitics of the Balkans," in *The Balkans in Transition*, eds. Jelavich and Jelavich, 1–55. In addition to this, there is a much larger collection of literature on more specific aspects and individual countries.

177 Hugh Seton-Watson, *The "Sick Heart" of Modern Europe: The Problem of the Danubian Lands* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1975); Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1962); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, vols. 1–3 (New York: Academic Press, 1974, 1980, 1989); Daniel Chirot, *Social Change in a Peripheral Society: The Creation of a Balkan Colony* (New York: Academic Press, 1976).

178 Michael C. Kaser and E.A. Radice, eds., *The Economic History of Eastern Europe, 1919–1975*, vols. 1–3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); Alice Teichova, "East-Central and South-East Europe, 1919–1939," in *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. 8, eds. P. Mathias and S. Pollard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 887–983;

Remarkably enough, American academia's "rediscovery" of and research on the Balkans as a cultural/historical space—distinct from both communist studies as area studies and East Central Europe—coincided with the revival of "ethnic studies." Between 1968 and 1972 a number of ethnic scholarly organizations (and affiliated periodicals) were set up to promote the study of their respective "ethnicity and history." These included the Modern Greek Studies Association, the Society of Romanian Studies, the Bulgarian Study Group, the Society for Albanian Studies, and the Turkish Studies Association. Meanwhile, the Yugoslavs were "represented" by three separate scholarly societies—Slovene, Croat, and Serbian—each providing a forum for the respective nationalist groups back home. The Greek, the Romanian, and the Bulgarian governments were particularly active in promoting their national studies and subsidizing chairs and professorships of their country's history.[179] The umbrella organization for these ethnically defined societies and university chairs was the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS), at whose annual conventions they organized separate sessions and panels. In 1974 a new academic journal, *South-Eastern Europe*, was launched with the aim of publicizing studies in history and the social sciences on "the geographic area presently comprising the five Balkan countries of Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Albania, and Greece, and also Turkey in Europe." The journal's most remarkable feature, however, turned out to be its consistency in putting itself in the service of Bulgarian and Romanian national-cultural propaganda. During the second half of the 1970s and early 1980s, six issues of the journal were devoted to various Romanian and Bulgarian "national anniversaries," featuring contributions not only from the architects of Romanian and Bulgarian national-communist historiographies but also, as in the Romanian

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Daniel Chirot, ed., *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Henryk Szlajfer, ed., *Economic Nationalism in East-Central Europe and South America 1918–1939* (Geneva: Droz, 1990); Nicos Mouzelis's *Politics in the Semi-Periphery: Early Parliamentarism and Late Industrialization in the Balkans and Latin America* (London: Macmillan, 1986) is a historical-sociological rendition of the same trend.

179 Greece provided U.S. $1 million to set up a chair of modern Greek studies at Harvard University (the Greek diaspora supplied another U.S. $2 million to establish a Greek studies chair at Princeton University). The establishment of a Romanian studies chair at Columbia University and a Hungarian studies chair at Indiana University was also made possible by substantial donations from the Romanian and the Hungarian governments. In 1981 a chair for Bulgarian studies was established at Ohio State University (Dimitrije Đorđević, "The Present State of Studies of Nineteenth-Century History of Balkan Peoples in the United States," in *Conference internationale des balkanologues*, 130–131).

case, from figures like Major-General Dr. Ilie Ceauşescu and Colonel Constantin Cazanişteanu.[180]

In this environment, the study of the Balkans and Southeastern Europe in the United States remained decentralized and dispersed, with just a few chairs devoted to Balkan studies as such and no single national institute specializing in the region. Byzantine and Ottoman (or Middle Eastern) studies came along with their integrative but also metropolitan viewpoint, which only rarely and marginally took the experiences of the imperial peripheries into account. Very few works dealing with the modern period encompassed the whole Balkan space, and when they did, they were usually compilative, bringing together individual national cases in separate chapters, rather than synthetic, that is, organized around certain common themes.[181] Rather than being undermined, the nation-state framework was thus reinforced by postwar regionalist studies, both local and foreign. With rare exceptions in certain subfields, like economic history,[182] the highest achievements of American Balkan studies concerned individual Balkan countries rather than comparative, let alone comprehensive, regional scholarship.

Émigré scholars in the United States continued to operate with the Balkans and, more rarely, Southeastern Europe as a cultural-historical or "civilizational" (in the *Annales* sense) notion, usually including Greece and the Ottoman Empire but rarely Turkey. Traian Stoianovich's (1921–2005) *A Study in Balkan Civilization*, which derived from the work of Fernand Braudel, was a daring attempt to conceive of the region in terms of "systems of coherences," that is, unbroken practices on the folk levels of social reality from earliest times, despite the linguistic shifts and vacillation of literary cultures and to the full exclusion of politics and warfare.[183] In the 1970s and 1980s, it was complemented by discussions of *longue-durée* socioeconomic trends and predicaments of modernization in light of the center/periphery and "world economy" paradigms, family patterns, and political trajectories. Regional variants of

180 Major-General Dr. Ilie Ceauşescu and Colonel Constantin Cazanişteanu, "The Union of the Danubian Principalities and the Proclamation of Independence: Premises for Romania's National and State Unity," *South-Eastern Europe* 6, no. 1 (1979), 73–80.

181 This was also true of the few attempts at regional synthesis like Barbara Jelavich's *History of the Balkans*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

182 John Lampe and Marvin Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550–1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982).

183 Traian Stoianovich, *A Study in Balkan Civilization* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1967). In a review of the book, William McNeil said he was "unconvinced that there is such a thing as Balkan civilization in the sense intended and explored in this book": *Journal of Social History* 2, no. 2 (1968): 172–174.

nationalism, authoritarianism, fascism, and communism, on the other hand, were cast in an Eastern European, rather than Balkan or Central European, framework and were often derived from specific sociopolitical features dating back to the Middle Ages. The aim was, to quote Peter Sugar's classification of nationalism, "to show how and why the origin, development, and significance of nationalism in Eastern Europe differs [sic] from that in other regions of the earth."[184] After 1989 these studies became a point of departure for the sizable political-science literature looking at the "political culture" in East Central and Southeastern Europe in attempts to assess these countries' prospects for morphing into liberal democracies.

In West Germany and Austria, where *Südosteuropaforschung* survived institutionally and in personnel, Southeastern Europe endured as a cultural-historical concept distinct from Eastern Europe and, in fact, invigorated discussions over its "changed understanding" in the new circumstances after the war. The two main centers were the Südost-Institut in Munich (re-opened in 1951) and the Österreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropa Institut in Vienna (1958). As elsewhere, Southeast European studies developed in the shadow of the escalating Cold War and focused on the Soviet threat. This general context helps explain both the subordinate status of *Südostforschung* within the "master discipline" of *Ostforschung* and the crucial role of the prewar "veterans" in re-establishing the institutional and organizational base of the field in the course of the 1950s.[185]

Terminologically circumscribed division between disciplinary fields was another characteristic feature of German postwar research on the region. *Balkanologie* was considered to be "at the core a linguistic discipline" (*Sprachwissenschaft*), more precisely, "the science of language in the culture of the Balkans. Its goal is to identify the patterns of multiethnic interaction within

184 Peter Sugar, "The Roots of Eastern European Nationalism," in *Actes du I^e Congrès International des Etudes Balkaniques*, vol. 1, 341. See also Peter Sugar and Ivo Lederer, eds., *Nationalism in Eastern Europe* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1969); Peter Sugar, ed., *Native Fascism in the Successor States, 1918–1945* (Santa Barbara, CA: A.B.C.-Clio Press, 1971); Peter Sugar, "Continuity and Change in Eastern European Authoritarianism: Autocracy, Fascism, and Communism," *East European Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (1984): 1–23.

185 Fritz Valjavec was a key figure in organizing *Südostforschung* on a "new basis" and reopening the Südost-Institut in Munich in 1951. He also took an active part in the foundation, in 1951, of Südostdeutschen Kulturwerkes and, in 1952, of the Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft in Munich. The Südostdeutschen Historischen Kommission, founded in 1957, provided yet another framework for the work of German and Austrian experts on the Balkans.

a specific and assumed-to-be-isomorphic spatio-temporal cultural zone."[186] The history department of the University of Munich and its journal, *Münchner Zeitschrift für Balkankunde*, intimated a broader reading of the scope of Balkan studies coextensive, next to philology, with the pre-modern (Byzantine and Ottoman) history of the region. "*Südosteuropa-Forschung*," on the other hand, was understood as an inherently multidisciplinary field strongly influenced by the *historische Socialwissenschaft* and comprising (modern) history, ethnology, cultural studies, the social sciences (geography, economy, law, sociology, political science), religion, and nationalism studies.[187]

For most of the period after World War II, *Balkan-* and *Südosteuropa-Forschung* in Germany and Austria was on the rise. The network of institutions, university chairs, and periodicals that dealt with the region is impressive.[188] The institutionalization of Southeast European studies in the Balkan countries in the late 1960s coincided with the movement towards general East-West détente and Chancellor Brandt's "new *Ostpolitik*." This allowed for the early incorporation of a German "Southeast European Working Group," a division of the German Research Association, into the network of AIESEE with the functions of a national committee. Under the presidency of historian Klaus-Detlev Grothusen, who also served as vice-president of AIESEE, the committee played an important role in coordinating and directing research on Southeastern Europe in the Federal Republic. Another venue mediating scholarly contacts across the Iron Curtain was the Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft, set up in 1953 with the explicit aim of revitalizing old connections and creating new ones to the cultural and scholarly life and to the general public in Southeastern

186 Norbert Reiter, "Über Balkanonogie," in *Südosteuropaforschung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und in Österreich*, ed. Klaus-Detlev Grothusen (Boppart: Boldt, 1979), 109.

187 See, for example, the chapters on the historical, legal, economic, and social-science Southeast European studies, all of them subsumed within a unified *Südosteuropa-Forschung* research field, in *Südosteuropaforschung in der Bundesrepublik*, ed. Grothusen, 115–191. I owe the observation about the Balkan studies profile of the history department in Munich to Oliver Jens Schmitt.

188 To the section specialized in historical studies of Southeastern Europe, the postwar Südost-Institut added a new one devoted to research of the contemporary period—Abteilung für Gegenwartsforschung. In addition to the institutions mentioned in note 212, a series of new publications propped up: *Südosteuropäische Arbeiten* (1953), *Wissenschaftlicher Dienst Südosteuropa* (1953; in 1982 renamed *Südosteuropa. Zeitschrift für Gegenwartsforschung*), and *Unterschungen zur Gegenwartskunde Südosteuropas* (1957), as well as the only international standard bibliography published at that time, *Südosteuropa-Bibliographie* (since 1956), presenting the multilingual scholarly production from and on the region.

Europe via seminars, guest lectures, and annual conferences (*Tagungen*), the papers of which were published in the *Südosteuropa-Jahrbuch*. Other publications of the society included *Südosteuropa-Schriften* and *Südosteuropa-Studien*. Between 1975 and 1998, seven comprehensive, meticulously compiled volumes of *Südosteuropa-Handbuch*, dedicated to the postwar development of the individual Balkan countries, were published under Grothusen's editorship. Meanwhile, the Südost-Institut in Munich supported work on several major reference books, such as the four-volume *Biographical Lexicon on the History of Southeastern Europe*, the *Historical Bibliography of Southeastern Europe*, and the *Bibliographical Handbook of Ethnic Groups in Southeastern Europe*.

Fritz Valjavec's and Franz Ronneberger's continued calls for discriminating between East Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe and for "strict separation of Southeastern from Eastern Europe in the geographical, historical, and cultural sense" acted in the same direction. Faced with the challenge of the rising *Osteuropaforschung* and building on the sociological and ethnological advances of the interwar *Volksbodenforschung*, the proponents of Southeast European studies attempted to go beyond the "working concept" approach and frame a distinct, "structurally unitary space" capable of vindicating and sustaining an autonomous research field.[189] The actual discoverers of such structural similarities were said to be the practitioners of the relatively new social sciences, like economy, sociology, and political science, including those whose 1930s work subscribed to the *Ergänzungswirtschaft* theory, like Giselher Wirsing and Hermann Gross.[190]

Following in Valjavec's footsteps, the representatives of *Südostforschung* from the 1960s to the 1980s conceived of Southeastern Europe as the area comprising the successor states of the Ottoman Empire and a large part of the Habsburg Empire (Hungary and Slovakia) by virtue of the fact that, after 1918, these states were "increasingly seized by processes of mutual convergence in terms of structure and development" in such a way as to require an unitary concept. What legitimated Southeastern Europe as a "unit of events" (*Geschehenseinheit*), transcending its historical in-betweenness and inner diversity, Mathias Bernath (1920–2013) argued, were not individual elements and factors per se but "the peculiar fusion that these elements had produced."

189 Fritz Valjavec, "Die Eigenart Südeuropas in Geschichte und Kultur," *Südosteuropa-Jahrbuch* 1 (1957): 53–62; Franz Ronneberger, "Wandlungen im Verständnis Südosteuropas. Betrachtungen über Gegenstand und Aufgaben der Südosteuropaforschung in Abhängigkeit von politischen und sozialen Konstellationen," in *Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Südosteuropa-Forschung*, ed. Th. Zotschew (Munich: Südosteuropa-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1963), 9–34.

190 Ronneberger, "Wandlungen im Verständnis Südosteuropas," 26–27.

The concept of Southeastern Europe thus conceived was meant to be a "neutral, non-political, and non-ideological concept that, moreover, eliminated the inherited historical-political dichotomy between the Danubian Monarchy and the Ottoman Balkans that had become redundant." As for the term "Balkans," it could remain applicable, as Valjavec had suggested, only as a "spatial designation for certain cultural-morphological interrelationships between individual Southeast European countries."[191] Along this division, *Südostforschung* concentrated on studies of (ethno)nationalism, interethnic relations and minorities, party-political systems and parliamentarism, family structures and clientelism, and authoritarian regimes and dictatorships in the twentieth century. *Balkanologie*, on the other hand, continued to be dominated by comparative literature, linguistics, and ethnography, focusing on the study of the "patterns of multi-ethnic interrelations and regional circumscription of the Balkans."[192]

Conclusion

The academic discourses of the Balkans and Southeastern Europe discussed here do not align easily with literature on Balkanism that tends to understand the Balkans merely as a negative, fixed concept. From inside and outside, the Balkans was continuously rearticulated in a great many ways, hinging on the cultural multiplicity of articulators and the variety of regionalizing perspectives. The Balkanistic discourses produced within the region were more than a sheer reflection— as either an embrace or a rejection—of the popular Western discourse. They conjured up their own "mental maps," symbolic geographies, and "maps of civilization," and pursued their own political and ideological agendas. The Balkan "subaltern" did speak, with different and assertive voices. Sometimes they connected with, and other times they debated against, the scholarly discourses produced outside the region, which again were varied enough to defy easy categorization. One should, therefore, speak of different Balkanisms, intra-regional and extra-regional, each related to a specific set of perceptions, interests, and strategies, and in a given temporal context.

All these regionalist schemes drew heavily on political values and relied on political support while, at the same time, seeking to spearhead and

191 Mathias Bernath, "Südosteuropäische Geschichte als gesonderte Disziplin," in *Forschungen zur osteuropäishen Geschichte* (Berlin: Osteuropa-Institut, 1973), 135–144. On the notions of "Balkans" and "Southeastern Europe," see Holm Sundhaussen, "Osteuropa, Südeuropa, Balkan: Überlegungen zur Konstruktion historischer Raumbegriffe," in *Was ist Osteuropa?* ed. Holm Sundhaussen (1. Colloquium des Osteuropa-Instituts, Berlin, 1998), 12–16.

192 Burkhart, *Kulturraum Balkan*, 11.

legitimize political decisions or reformulate (geo)political visions. A constant source of politicization of scholarly regionalisms was the fusion of regionalist and nationalist designs regarding politics, the economy, or culture. The drive for methodological re-scaling beyond the national often originated from essentially nationalist agendas. Indeed, there was no clear-cut difference but a complex relationship between the conceptualizations of the national and the supranational or regional. Nationalist arguments could be adduced to buttress a regionalist framework, and the interpretation of the (supranational) region could serve to bolster a nationalist project.

Yet regionalist ideas did not exist merely to reinforce political projects. Even if scholarly argumentation and political objectives often intermingled and fed on each other, this does not mean that public and scholarly regionalist discourses necessarily overlapped. Political and scholarly regionalizations interacted and amalgamated in many ways and on different levels, but this interaction did not mean invariable conformity by academia. Identical references and terminologies often carried different meanings in political (or popular) and academic discourses. Vast areas of Balkan studies, as they developed in and outside the region, were not politicized in any conventional sense of the term. This, however, ought not to blind us to the inherent politics of scholarly concepts themselves: academic discourses wield a powerful role in the social construction of space and in the production of cognitive maps and political realities. Bringing these discourses to bear on the discussions of how the Balkans were thought of complicates the picture but also, hopefully, enhances our awareness of what the production of space—and images thereof—involves.

CHAPTER 3

Entangled Geographies of the Balkans: The Boundaries of the Region and the Limits of the Discipline

Alexander Vezenkov

Studies on Balkan history usually start with a brief outline of the geographical scope of the region. Even so, most authors only briefly fulfill the obligation to specify the boundaries of the area in question, as they think it unnecessary to repeat something so well-known and waste time with formalistic details. In fact, the boundaries of the region are almost always defined similarly, and more ambitious studies believe nothing is gained by discussing these at length, while some works simply omit such information as self-evident banalities.

On the other hand, the problem of the spatial dimensions and the boundaries of the researched area is of central importance to any regional studies. This is certainly true of Balkan studies as well, especially in comparison with other disciplines that touch on the same region, such as Slavic studies, Byzantine studies, (Modern) Greek studies, Ottoman studies, and Turkology. By definition, the term "Balkan" is more closely related to a specific geographical territory (the Balkan peninsula, the Balkans) than to any ethnic, religious, or cultural characteristics ("Turkish," "Greek," or "Slavic"; "Islamic" or "Christian"; "Ottoman" or "Byzantine"). Therefore the problem of the boundaries and spatial dimensions of the region is entangled with the question of what the Balkans are, and inevitably also with the question of what the object of Balkan studies is.

In this study I will try to examine these interrelations between the different visions of the spatial dimensions of the area and the different approaches of those who study it. I will start by summarizing the main arguments in the discussions about the boundaries of the Balkans so far. Then I will propose a more detailed analysis of two case studies that could provide alternative approaches to this problem.

1 The Spatial Dimensions of the Balkans—Definitions and Debates

In this first part I will try to demonstrate how different definitions of the boundaries of the Balkans correspond to specific perceptions of the region. In fact, current academic studies only occasionally and briefly deal with this

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problem, while more heated debates took place only long ago. Still, these discussions must be taken into account as a starting point. I will also look at various scholars who do not discuss the boundaries of the Balkans in detail but nevertheless provide brief definitions of the scope of the region. I will try to demonstrate how these definitions reflect the views about the region and the approaches of the respective authors. In addition, I will demonstrate that although some works on Balkan history refer to the region as a whole in their titles, their content may vary, with some parts of the region overrepresented at the expense of others. Works on Balkan history concentrate on different parts of the region and emphasize different problems, thus indirectly defining the scope of the region.

Another problem to be discussed is the relation between the terms "Balkan peninsula" and "the Balkans" and, respectively, between "the peninsula" and "the region," as well as between "the Balkans" and "Southeastern Europe." Moreover, the role of the formerly used term "European Turkey" has to be analyzed. It is also important to take into account why each of these terms is preferred in different contexts. I will examine the use of different types of borders to define the spatial boundaries of the region—some related to physical geography, others to present-day political or past imperial borders that have left visible traces in the cultural landscape. This choice is often related not only to the chronological scope of the respective studies but also to the research priorities of their authors. The analysis will focus on recent debates, but first I will briefly outline the issues of contention in the discussions up to the 1980s that are relevant to the present situation.

Surrounded by Water on Three Sides

For a long time, the debates over the spatial dimensions of the Balkans focused on their border with the rest of Europe.[1] Because, like every other peninsula, this one is surrounded by water on three sides, the maritime borders seemed beyond dispute, and thus it was the land border that became the center of the discussions.[2]

1 Francis Carter, "Introduction to the Balkan Scene," in *An Historical Geography of the Balkans*, ed. Francis Carter (New York: Academic Press, 1977), 1.

2 Jovan Cvijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique: Géographie humaine* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1918), 6: "La Péninsule Balkanique étant entourée à l'Est, au Sud et à l'Ouest par des mers, il ne reste à la delimiter qu'au Nord." = Jovan Cvijić, *Balkansko poluostrvo* (Belgrade: SANU, 1987), 16; Georges Castellan, *Histoire des Balkans, XIV^e–XX^e siècles* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), 17: "Péninsule, donc limitée sur trois côtés par des mers," etc.

At first glance it seems understandable that the border of a peninsula from the main landmass is defined by elements of physical geography—mountains and rivers. In 1808, when August Zeune coined the term "Balkan peninsula" (*Balkanhalbeiland*), he accepted the Balkan mountain range as its northern border.[3] According to a widely believed explanation, Zeune accepted the then-dominant belief that the mountain range in question ran across the whole territory between the Black Sea and the Adriatic, ending close to the Gulf of Trieste. Paradoxically, the name "Balkan peninsula" outlasted the refutation of this fallacy, but the mountain range itself was not retained as a northern border of the peninsula, not to speak of the region. Even Zeune himself, in a geography textbook published in 1844, included among the Balkan states ("*Staaten des Balkanlandes*") not only the territory between the Balkan mountain range and the Danube but also the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia.[4] In his previous work, *Gea*, the territories between the Balkan mountain range and the Carpathians were presented as a separate area and named "*Balkan-Karpatenland*."[5]

Both views expressed by Zeune correspond to popular opinions from that time about the spatial scope of the peninsula. On the one hand, some works from the early nineteenth century identify the Haemus Mountains as the northern border of the "Hellenic peninsula."[6] On the other hand, around the 1830s another designation, the "Oriental peninsula," became popular, and at least initially, most authors believed that it included Wallachia and Moldavia, and some explicitly pointed to the Carpathians as its northern border.[7] Some

3 August Zeune, *Gea. Versuch, die Erdrinde sowohl im Land- als Seeboden mit Bezug auf Natur- und Völkerleben zu schildern*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Nauck, 1830), 238.

4 August Zeune, *Die drei Stufen der Erdkunde für höhere und niedere Schulen* (Berlin: Theod. Chr. Fr. Enslin, 1844), 72, quoted in Ivan Părvev, "Edno neochakvano 'bashtinstvo.' Zhizneniyat păt na August Zeune i negoviyat 'Balkanski poluostrov,'" in *Dvuvekovniyat păt na edno ponyatie. "Balkanskiyat poluostrov" (1808–2008)*, eds. Ivan Părvev and Mariya Barămova (Sofia: Sv. Kliment Ohridski, 2014), 16.

5 Zeune, *Gea*, 3rd ed., 250.

6 Emile Lefranc, *Abrégé de géographie ancienne comparée, redigé sur un plan historique*, 6th ed. (Brussels: La Société Nationale, 1840), 96.

7 Adrien [Adriano] Balbi, *Éléments de géographie générale ou Description abrégée de la tèrre* (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1843), 203ff. See also Victor Levasseur, *Géographie moderne: redigée d'après les matériaux les plus récents sur le plan de l'ouvrage de Balbi. Nouvelle édition* (Paris: Didier, 1839), 142; Dora d'Istria, *Les femmes en Orient, v. 1. La péninsule orientale* (Zurich: Meyer & Zeller, 1859), 10.

works subdivided the peninsula into two parts, identifying the area south of the Haemus range as the Hellenic peninsula proper.[8]

Meanwhile, another interpretation gained support and ultimately prevailed. It defines the northern border of the peninsula according to rivers. It claims that the border coincides with the Danube from the delta until Belgrade, then follows the river Sava, and finally (according to various interpretations) either follows the Sava until its source in Slovenia or one of its right-hand-side tributaries—the Kupa or the Una. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the dominant view was that the border of the peninsula follows the rivers Danube, Sava, and Kupa, consecutively, and later on, the line that goes directly from the source of the Kupa to the northern part of the Kvarner Gulf near Rijeka.[9] Later, Jovan Cvijić advocated using a somewhat different line, whose westernmost part is located farther north. According to him, the border follows the river Sava to its source, goes through the Ljubljana Basin, then follows the river Idrijca until it joins the Soča (Isonzo) and finally follows the Soča until the Gulf of Trieste.[10] Thus the Istrian peninsula turns out to be part of the Balkans, and in terms of the political map, part of Slovenia and even a

8 Félix Ansart, *Essai de géographie historique ancienne, à l'usage des classes de sixième, de cinquième et de quatrième*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Maire-Nyon, 1837), 26–37; *Turkey and the Balkan States Described by Great Writers*, ed. Esther Singleton (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1908), 57 (text by Sutherland Menzies); cf. Boyan Beshevliev, "Opredelyane na geografskoto ponyatie 'Balkanski poluostrov'—alternativi i analogii v minaloto i sega," *Balkanistichen forum* 6, no. 2 (1997): 22, footnote 25. In a much later work, Konstantin Jireček identifies the line between the Bay of Vlora and the Gulf of Salonica as the boundary between the Hellenic peninsula proper and the rest of the Balkan peninsula: Konstantin Jireček, *Geschichte der Serben*, vol. 1 (Gotha: F.A. Perthes, 1911), 3–4.

9 E.g., A.E. Lux, *Die Balkanhalbinsel* (*mit Ausschluss von Griechenland*) (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1887), 2: "... vom nördlichen Kunste des Golfes von Quarnero über den 1528 m hohen Berg Risnjak, sodann längs des Laufes des Kulpa, Save und Donau bis zür Mündung dieses Stromes in das Schwarze Meer." An earlier interpretation was to consider the northern border of the peninsula the direct line between the mouth of the Danube and the Gulf of Quarnero: Theodor Schacht, *Lehrbuch der Geographie alter und neuer Zeit* (Mainz: C.G. Kunze, 1846), 442: "Ziehen wir eine linie von der Donaumündung zum Golf Quarnero. ..." Similarly, some scholars later suggested treating the Odessa-Trieste line as the northern border of the peninsula, but none of these straight lines was widely accepted.

10 There are two later and slightly different interpretations concerning the segment between the Sava and the Soča. According to them, the border of the peninsula follows the line 1) Sava-Sora [river]—Idrijca—Soča or 2) Sava—Krka [river]—Postojnska Vrata—Vipava [river]—Soča. Cf. Carter, "Introduction to the Balkan Scene," 8; Beshevliev, "Opredelyane na geografskoto ponyatie 'Balkanski poluostrov,'" 20, footnote 6.

tiny part of Italy around Trieste belongs to the Balkans. This definition seems to have become the most widely used one, but a number of authors continued to refer to the river Kupa as a northern border.[11] According to a third, different (and less common) interpretation, the border of the peninsula is much farther south—after the Sava it follows the river Una. In summary, currently the interpretations diverge only concerning the westernmost section of the northern border of the peninsula—between the upper stream of the Sava and the Adriatic—while there is a consensus about the rest of the borders. In practice, most authors simply omit these controversial details and indicate only the Danube and Sava rivers as the northern limit of the Balkan peninsula.

Although this line was widely accepted as the northern border of the peninsula, it soon became the source of another controversy—to what extent the rivers could be regarded as natural barriers important enough to separate adjacent regions. This is a question that constantly reappears alongside the repeated references to the Danube-Sava line. The debate here starts with the theoretical issue of whether rivers should be considered only natural barriers, but then it goes into the specifics of the Balkans, of their past and inhabitants. Jacques Ancel, for example, rejects the general view that the Danube constitutes the northern border of the peninsula. He considers it instead a link, especially in the area around the Iron Gates.[12] Otto Maul also criticizes this definition, arguing that "rivers connect and unify rather than divide."[13] Leften Stavrianos takes the same view and makes a comparison with the very different cases of the Pyrenees and the Alps, which effectively separate the respective peninsulas from the continental landmass: "In contrast, the Danube River is not a barrier but rather a link between the Balkans and Central Europe."[14] Milovan Gavazzi, who studies the internal subdivision of the region, discovers similar traditional cultures on both sides of these two allegedly borderline rivers.[15]

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11 George Hoffman, *The Balkans in Transition* (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand, 1963), 9, 10; Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, vol. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1.

12 Jacques Ancel, *Peuples et Nations des Balkans* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1926), 9–10: "On considère parfois le Danube comme la limite septentrionale de la péninsule des Balkans. Or le Danube moyen ne fut jamais une frontière. . . . Le fleuve est plutôt un lien; dès qu'il sort de la zone découverte, il est même le seul lien."

13 Otto Maull, "Einheit und Gliederung Südosteuropas," *Leipziger Vierteljahrsschrift für Südosteuropa* 1, no. 4 (1938): 5.

14 Leften S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1958), 1.

15 Milovan Gavazzi, "Die Kulturgeographische Gliederung Südosteuropas," *Südost-Foschungen* 15 (1956): 5–21.

Even before these authors, Jovan Cvijić remarked that northwest of the Iron Gates, the Sava-Danube line crossed ethnically homogeneous territory ("Serbo-Croatian"), and thus it was inappropriate from an anthropogeographic point of view.[16] Obviously Cvijić's comment was related to a national political project, but with the creation of Yugoslavia, this argument turned out to be particularly important. Thus some authors decided to treat as a northern border of the peninsula the river Drava instead of the river Sava; the Drava flowed closer to and largely coincided with the northern border of Yugoslavia, respectively Croatia.[17]

But even the perception of the Danube downstream from the Iron Gates as a border is no less vehemently questioned. In their *Balkan Economic History*, John Lampe and Marvin Jackson relied on Joseph Roglić and Yves Chatigneau, who criticized the view that the Danube constituted a "natural border." The two economic historians accepted a similar approach and ultimately included Wallachia and Moldavia in their study: "The river is surely a unifying link between the Romanian principalities to the north and the other lands to the south, not the northern border of the Balkans as several leading geographers once argued."[18]

It can also be asked why the border follows only part of the Danube and then follows the Danube's tributary the Sava, and finally, in turn, various tributaries of the Sava. The most plausible explanation is that scholars were simply looking for a way to delimit the territories located south of the main continental landmass. At the same time, it is clear that what is regarded as the border of the peninsula is mostly those parts of the aforementioned rivers that coincide with long-term political borders. In fact, rivers, regardless of their size, do not necessarily serve as political (and therefore historical and cultural) borders. The largest rivers in the world, the Amazon, the Nile, the Yangtze, and the Mississippi, do not coincide with political frontiers. By contrast, much more modest waterways like the Rhine, the Elba, and the Oder correspond with important borders. In some cases the role of a "natural" border might be assumed by an artificially

16 Cvijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique*, 7 = *Balkansko poluostrvo*, 18.

17 Among the more recent studies: Dennis P. Hupchick, *The Balkans: From Constantinople to Communism* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), xiv (map 1), 2.

18 John Lampe and Marvin Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550–1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 5. They quote Joseph L. Roglić, "Die Gebirge als die Wiege des geschichtlichen Geschehens in Südosteuropa," *Colloquium geographicum, Argumenta geographica*, vol. 12 (Bonn, 1970): 226; and Y[ves] Chatigneau, *Les pays Balkaniques. Geographie Universelle*, vol. 7 (Paris, 1934).

constructed waterstream—today it is generally accepted that the Suez Canal separates Africa from Asia, and some hold that the Panama Canal separates South America from North America. In many cases the reason the natural elements of physical geography and the political borders coincide is that, during peace negotiations, rivers (and mountains) were often used to trace the frontiers between rival neighbors. In cases when such borders remained valid for long periods of time, the respective rivers could become effective barriers, further deepening the division between neighboring states, communities, and cultures.

Concerning the northern border of the Balkan peninsula, the Lower Danube was for centuries the frontier separating the Ottoman Empire proper from the Danubian Principalities and later also the Banat region (included since 1718 in the Hungarian provinces of the Habsburg Empire). Likewise, the lower part of the Sava largely coincided with the border between the Ottoman provinces (namely the Pashalik of Belgrade, today part of "Central Serbia") and Srem under Habsburg rule (1699–1918, now part of Vojvodina), and then with the border between Bosnia and Croatia (more precisely, the region of Slavonia, part of the Habsburg possessions in 1699–1918). Farther west, the border between Bosnia and Croatia largely coincides with the river Una, and that might explain why some scholars regard this river as a border of the peninsula as well. A substantial part of the upper stream of the river Kupa coincides with the actual border between Slovenia and Croatia, as well as between the Austrian and the Hungarian part of the Habsburg monarchy before 1918; earlier, the Ottoman-Habsburg frontier followed its lower stream.[19] The border, which is the most northern of all these (until the source of the Sava and then following the Idrijca and the Soča), has the advantage of including Slovenia in the Balkans, at least partially, as well as a much larger part of Croatia—corresponding to the ambitions to create a common state for the South Slavs and later to the realities after its foundation. To sum up, in most cases the scholars point to specific physical borders simply because they coincide with present-day political

19 Cvijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique*, 6. Cvijić questioned the choice of this border for a number of reasons, one of them being that it closely follows the former border between the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires: "Cette limite est quelque peu factice. Elle ne coïncide ni avec le relief, puisqu'elle traverse les chaînes dinariques, ni avec les faits ethnographiques, puisqu'elle coupe en deux la masse du peuple serbo-croate, ni avec la frontière politique actuelle. Il est à remarquer pourtant qu'elle fut autrefois à peu près la frontière entre la Turquie et l'Autriche. Il est à supposer que ce fait ne fut pas sans influence sur les premières délimitations."

borders or previous imperial borders; certain elements of physical geography are instrumentalized to describe a space otherwise defined by political history.

From this perspective, the role of the Danube as a border river in the eastern part of the region should be considered in light of the fact that for the entire Ottoman period, the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia preserved their autonomy. The only exception to the Lower Danube being a border is the Ottoman possessions on the Black Sea coast beyond the Danube Delta, which the empire held from the late fifteenth to the early nineteenth century. Given that the Danube was accepted as the peninsula's northern border shortly before and during the mid-nineteenth century, one should also take into account the transformation of autonomy of the Danubian principalities into de facto independence (at least vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire) at that time. Until the mid-nineteenth century (and in many cases until 1878) the two principalities (as well as Romania) were usually considered part of European Turkey, and therefore this segment of the Danube was not yet seen as the border of the Ottoman possessions in Europe.

Concerning the area west of Wallachia, a crucial role was played by the relatively stable Ottoman-Habsburg border on the Danube and Sava in 1699–1878 and especially after 1739—the northern border of the Balkan peninsula in its western part (more precisely, the Danube-Sava-Una line) coincides to a large extent with the Ottoman-Habsburg border from the period in question. After centuries of the Ottoman Empire's dramatic advances, followed by its retreat, the Peace of Karlowitz in 1699 recognized the authority of the Habsburgs over Central Hungary, Transylvania, Bačka, Syrmia (Srem/Srijem), and Slavonia. At the same time, the Republic of Venice gained definitive control over Dalmatia (roughly within the actual borders of this region) when it took possession of several fortresses there. Following the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, the Habsburg Empire gained the Banat and temporarily (for approximately two decades, until 1739) the Pashalik of Belgrade, part of northern Bosnia, as well as Oltenia (which otherwise belonged to Wallachia). Once the Pashalik of Belgrade and Northern Bosnia were restored to the Ottoman Empire after the Treaty of Belgrade (1739), the Ottoman-Habsburg border was stabilized and remained almost intact until 1878.[20] The "military frontier" (*Militärgrenze*) of the Habsburg Empire was transferred and further developed along this line (continuing further along the Carpathians vis-à-vis the Romanian Principalities), and in fact it remained there for the longest time.

20 One last small change took place with the Treaty of Sistova (1791), when, after several revisions of this segment of the border, the Habsburg Empire took control of Orşova.

Finally, it should be stressed that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire lost its territories north of the Black Sea, located east of the Danube-Prut line. More precisely, this process ended in 1812, when the region of Budjak fell into Russian hands. In this way the Ottoman provinces in Europe ("European Turkey") were reduced to almost exactly the same territories that are now called the "Balkan peninsula."

In the nineteenth century a new process of fragmentation started on the Ottoman side of this frontier, the first step of which was the creation of the autonomous Principality of Serbia. Thus began a major transformation that, until 1918, affected only the onetime European Turkey. In fact, it was precisely the secession of new small states in the course of the nineteenth century that made the designation "European Turkey" confusing, as the European possessions of the Ottoman Empire were constantly shrinking. This allowed new names for the region to emerge—"Hellenic," "Olympic," "Oriental," "Thracian," and "Illyrian peninsula" were some of the names used, and in the long run "Balkan peninsula" was adopted. The paradox is that a political reference was replaced by something that sounds like a fact of physical geography, the spatial scope being almost identical. The Habsburg Empire maintained the status quo during the nineteenth century, with the exception of its occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878. This permitted the Danube-Sava line, which for a long time was the border of the Ottoman Empire in Europe, to remain the boundary delineating the post-Ottoman space in Europe and also to be accepted as the border of the "peninsula." Therefore it is not surprising that for a time, the terms "European Turkey" and "Balkan peninsula" (along with others like "Haemus peninsula") were synonymous.[21]

From this perspective, the problem with the westernmost section of the northern border of the peninsula does not result from the lack of a sufficiently large river. The reason is that along the Adriatic coast, there were Venetian and later Habsburg possessions much further south than even the line drawn by the Sava and Una rivers; most of the region of Dalmatia is located south of this line. Dalmatia, though formally located on the peninsula, politically and culturally remained largely outside the Ottoman Balkans—thus it is not included in Ottoman-centered studies on the Balkans. Further south, the same is true of the Ionian Islands. On the Adriatic coast, the political borders of "European Turkey" do not coincide with any imaginable natural border of the "peninsula."

All this makes it easier to understand why the idea that the Balkan mountain range constituted the northern border of the peninsula was finally

21 E.g., Eduard Rüffer, *Die Balkanhalbinsel und ihre Völker vor der Lösung der orientalischen Frage* (Bautzen: Schmaler & Pech, 1869), 44.

abandoned. The problem has little to do with the fact that in reality, the range does not reach the Adriatic—in this part of the region, there are other mountains that could be designated as a border, in the same way as the rivers Sava, Una, Kupa, and others. The reason is instead that, aside from the short period of existence of the autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia (1879–1885), the Balkan mountain range did not coincide with political borders in the modern era. It is well known that in the distant past, this mountain range played such a role: in ancient times it coincided with the northern limit of the influence of ancient Greek culture, while the area to its north was only later Latinized under the rule of the Roman Empire. That is the most plausible origin of the perception that the Haemus range was the northern border of the "Hellenic Peninsula." The Balkan mountain range served as a border for an important part of the Middle Ages as well: Petăr Mutafchiev insisted on the crucial role played by "the Balkan [range] in our history" as a natural, easily defendable frontier between Bulgaria and Byzantium.[22] Still, the northern border of the "peninsula" was traced much later, at a time when this mountain no longer constituted a border. As seen above, it almost coincided with the frontiers of the European territories of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century—the period when August Zeune first proposed the term "Balkan peninsula," while "European Turkey" was already somewhat popular.

The case of the Carpathians, the other mountain range, which is regarded in some cases as a northern border of the region (and even of the "peninsula"), is very different. The Carpathian Mountains trace the borders in the eastern part of the Kingdom of Hungary (during the Middle Ages and, respectively, after the Compromise of 1867), but the location of the range as a whole is such that it cannot be considered a border of the Balkans or of Southeastern Europe (on the map it looks almost like a semicircle opened to the west). In cases when scholars do not include the territories of the Kingdom of Hungary within the region, the borders of the region follow the Southern and the Eastern Carpathians. Actually, this is the line that until 1918 separated Wallachia and Moldavia, respectively Romania, from the Habsburg Empire. The creation of Greater Romania in 1918 made the references to this border inadequate for studies of the twentieth century. In addition, Romanian historiography strives to present the past of Transylvania in parallel with the past of Wallachia and Moldavia, meaning that it downplays the importance of this border and portrays it as an externally imposed division of the Romanian lands. Even so, some other authors implicitly or even explicitly accept this line. That was true primarily of some early-nineteenth-century geographers quoted above who used the term

22 Petăr Mutafchiev, *Kniga za bălgarite* (Sofia: BAN, 1987), 65–89.

"Oriental peninsula."[23] At that time, such an interpretation seemed more natural, because Wallachia and Moldavia were still considered part of the Ottoman possessions, and the term "Oriental peninsula" was explicitly designed to replace the notion of "European Turkey." Some contemporary scholars also shared this view. For instance, Leften Stavrianos accepted the Carpathians as a northern border even though this interpretation diverged from the definition of the geographers, as well as from the political realities of his time, and was more appropriate for earlier periods: "we will consider the dividing line between the peninsula and the rest of Europe to run along the length of the Sava River to its junction with the Danube at Belgrade, then down the Danube from Belgrade to the Iron Gate, and finally around the Carpathians to the Russian frontier to the northeast."[24] In this case as well, it is worth underlining the reference to political history in order to trace the borders of a "peninsula."

When the object of study is Southeastern Europe, and when it includes Hungary, the Northern Carpathians are treated as a northern border of the region. In any case, accepting the Carpathians as a border of the region inevitably raises another question about its eastern border north of the Black Sea. One option is considering the river Dniester such a border; in this way the region includes all of Moldavia/Moldova, as well as of Greater Romania (1918–1940). If the region includes only Romania in its borders from 1878–1918 and after 1945, then the eastern border of the region follows the river Prut. Still, in most cases the delineation of Southeastern Europe from the rest of the continent does not rely on "natural borders."

But even concerning the Balkans, the question of the "natural borders" fades away. Even if in theory, the starting point of the debate was the borders of a "peninsula," it gradually moved away from there, and contemporary scholars usually discuss "the Balkans" or "the region" without referring to the "Balkan peninsula" and its northern border. A number of studies, even those on geography, simply omit the question of the northern border of the peninsula. For instance, André Blanc, at the beginning of his short book *Geography of the Balkans*, stated that he would not deal with the "fastidious problem" of the borders and the definition of the region.[25] A few years later, Pierre-Yves Péchoux and Michel Sivignon also skipped the discussion of this problem.[26] Similarly, John Fine did not provide a definition of the region in his study on the Balkans

23 Balbi, *Éléments de géographie générale*, 203 ff; Levasseur, *Géographie moderne*, 142, etc.

24 Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453*, 2–3; later also accepted by Hupchick, *The Balkans*, xiv (map 1), 2.

25 André Blanc, *Géographie des Balkans* (Paris: PUF, 1965), 5–6.

26 Pierre-Yves Péchoux and Michel Sivignon, *Les Balkans* (Paris: PUF, 1971).

during the Middle Ages. He even started with an ironic remark about such an approach: "Most general surveys of the Balkans begin with a survey of the geography, presenting the reader with a long list of rivers, mountains and products. This, despite the great natural beauty of most of the geographical features, is usually fairly boring and virtually impossible to remember."[27] In other cases the concept of the "Balkan peninsula" is directly questioned—for instance, in the economic history of the region written by John Lampe and Marvin Jackson, who referred to earlier studies by George W. Hoffman and Joseph L. Roglić: "In addition, modern geographers seem agreed in rejecting the old idea of a Balkan Peninsula."[28]

Even if not always intentional, the omission of the definition of the "Balkan peninsula" is not without a reason. This is because Balkan studies is interested not in the physical geography of the peninsula but rather in the history of European Turkey and the successor states created on its territories, and sometimes also in the distant past of these countries. In many cases the term "peninsula" is used as a synonym for "the Balkans" and "the region" only in order to avoid repeating them too often. At the same time it must be noted that the perception of the region as a peninsula is implicitly preserved by the recognition of its sea borders; the rivers Danube and Sava are mentioned less often.

The Region—Bigger or Smaller

All things considered, in historical studies the "Balkan peninsula" has now given way to "the Balkans" and to "Southeastern Europe." In this case the researched area almost always expands further north from the Danube-Sava line, but its spatial scope differs, sometimes substantially. The point here is that the choice to define the region more broadly or more narrowly corresponds to specific academic interests in Balkan or Southeast European studies, respectively.

Authors who choose to define the region more narrowly, in fact, are focused on the history of the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire (according to its early nineteenth-century borders) as well as the history of the successor states in these lands. But even the choice to study this narrow and clearly defined nucleus is hard to follow in practice, and Balkan studies usually include larger areas for two different reasons. First, some scholars also include in their studies territories that were held by the Ottomans for a shorter time in the sixteenth

27 John Fine, *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), 1.

28 Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, 3. They quote George W. Hoffman, ed., *Eastern Europe: Essays in Geographic Problems* (London: Methuen, 1971), 21; and Roglić, "Die Gebirge als die Wiege," 225–230.

and seventeenth centuries, which in practice means including mainly the territories of the Hungarian crown. Another, more important reason for including additional territories in the examined area is that some former Habsburg provinces were included in two of the "Balkan" states: because of Yugoslavia, the Balkans are considered to include Croatia, Vojvodina, and Slovenia, and, because of Romania, they are considered to include Transylvania (including Banat, Crișana, and Maramureș) and (the Romanian part of) Bucovina. It should be noted that Slovenia and Bucovina (although for a shorter time—from 1775 to 1918) were part of the Austrian part of the Habsburg Empire and have even less in common with the (post-)Ottoman Balkans.

Almost in parallel with the popularization of the notion "Balkan peninsula," in the nineteenth century there also appeared the name "Southeastern Europe" and later even "Southeast European peninsula."[29] Various scholars advocated the latter as more precise than the already criticized name "Balkans"; it gained a certain popularity but never became the only designation of the region.[30] In the end, both terms remained in use (while all other names virtually disappeared by the beginning of the twentieth century), and this dual naming turned into one of the most discussed questions regarding the definition of the region. In most cases, the two names are used as synonyms; however, "Southeastern Europe" is often seen as "neutral" and thus preferable to the stigmatizing and pejorative "Balkans." More importantly, the spatial scope of the two notions is not necessarily identical.

German-speaking academic circles explicitly accept that Southeastern Europe comprises a substantially larger area than the Balkans. In fact, this is a subjective "German" interpretation—the idea that the region consists of territories southeast of Germany. Fritz Valjavec defined it this way during World War II, at a time when the Third Reich included Austria and de facto (as an "autonomous" territory) the Czech lands (the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia).[31] Some years later, in his *History of Southeastern Europe* (1950), Georg Stadtmüller included the territories "from the Sudeten to the Bosporus," or in other words, the territories "southeast of the historical border of the German Reich" or simply "southeast of Germany" until the Adriatic, the Aegean, and

29 Alexander Drace-Francis, "Zür Geschichte des Südosteuropakonzepts bis 1914," in *Europa und die Grenzen im Kopf*, eds. Karl Kaser, Dagmar Gramshammer-Hohl, and Robert Pichler (Klagenfurt and Celovec: Wieser, 2003), 275–286.

30 The problem is presented in more detail and with references to secondary literature in Diana Mishkova's contribution to this volume.

31 Fritz Valjavec, "Südosteuropa und Balkan," *Südost-forschungen* 7, nos. 1–2 (1942): 7.

the Black Sea.[32] Thus the book even includes the Czech lands. This is already a strictly (West) German view about what is southeast, which differs from the Austrian view. But even if we set aside this rather exceptional case, German-speaking academic circles in Southeast European studies study a larger area than do their colleagues in the related field of Balkan studies, especially those working in research institutions in the region itself. Because of the strong and influential presence of German and Austrian academic circles in Balkan, respectively Southeast European, studies, this definition has a wider impact.

In fact, the perception of the term "Southeastern Europe" as more acceptable than the allegedly stigmatizing term "Balkans" leads in the same direction. In practical terms the very choice of how to name the region is related to the way its boundaries are defined, because the seemingly more neutral term "Southeastern Europe" allows the inclusion of some countries whose intellectual and political elites otherwise refuse to be named "Balkan." This is clearly visible in the cases of Romania and Croatia, which are much more often present in works on "Southeastern Europe" than in those dealing with "the Balkans." An illustrative (and at the same time very influential) case is that of Nicolae Iorga, who regarded Romania as part of Southeastern Europe but not of the Balkans.

As a result, wide circles accepted the notion that one of the terms corresponds to a larger territory than the other. In 1963 George Hoffman summarized: "Today, scholars of many countries use the term 'South-eastern Peninsula' or 'South-east Europe,' while the term 'Balkan Peninsula' or 'Balkans' is given to a geographically more restricted area."[33] In the introduction of a 1977 collective volume on the historical geography of the Balkans, Francis Carter repeats the same sentence with minor differences in wording.[34]

The choice to define the geographical scope of study more broadly or narrowly is directly related to the content of the work on the Balkans / Southeastern Europe. Limiting the research to the narrower area of "European Turkey" from the beginning of the nineteenth century makes it possible to concentrate more on Ottoman rule and its legacy. This is also the reason why many studies on the Balkans repeat a number of general observations and conclusions valid for the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East, and "the Orient" in general. At the

32 Georg Stadtmüller, *Geschichte Südosteuropas*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1976; 1st ed., 1950), 13 and 14. Citations are to the 1976 edition.

33 Hoffman, *The Balkans in Transition*, 11–12.

34 Carter, "Introduction to the Balkan Scene," 8; cf. Derek Hall and Darrick Danta, *Reconstructing the Balkans: A Geography of the New Southeast Europe* (Chichester: John Wiley, 1996), 3; Beshevliev, "Opredelyane na geografskoto ponyatie "Balkanski poluostrov," 19.

same time, in many cases the essence and the background of the "Balkan" characteristics are sought as early as possible in pre-Ottoman times—primarily in the Byzantino-Slavic Middle Ages but even in ancient times and prehistory, "discovering" the roots of the distinctive features of today's region in the legacy left by Thracians, Dacians, and/or Illyrians.

The larger framework of Southeastern Europe much more clearly brings to the forefront the topic of the region's well-known "diversity," because it covers not only the (post-)Ottoman, but also—almost to the same extent—the (post-)Habsburg space. In other words, this is the diversity not of one multinational empire but of two. At the center of interest are not the nuclei of these empires, respectively their main successor states (Turkey and Austria), but the other countries included in the empires. In the 1970s Mathias Bernath defined Southeast European studies as a discipline examining the post-Ottoman and the post-Habsburg spaces, which were increasingly converging.[35] That means studying the disintegration of the two empires in the zone where their influences and legacies intersect.[36] From this perspective, one would examine not one border or another but a transitional zone that is large enough to deserve special interest in and of itself.[37] Obviously such an approach best suits studies of the former Yugoslavia and of Romania after 1918—the countries that include territories from the two former empires.

It is important to note that Southeastern Europe does not include the territories under Ottoman control that were located east of the Romanian principalities: the Crimean Khanate, which was under Ottoman suzerainty until the late eighteenth century, and other territories controlled by the Ottoman Empire north of the Black Sea and beyond the Danube Delta (Budjak and Yedisan), not to mention those in the Caucasus. Thus, for example, in his study of Southeastern Europe under Ottoman rule, Peter Sugar mentions these territories only occasionally in relation to the rivalry with Russia.[38] Obviously, the fact that these territories were under Ottoman rule for a relatively long period is not sufficient to treat them as part of Southeastern Europe, and the

35 Mathias Bernath, "Südosteuropäische Geschichte als gesonderte Disziplin," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 20 (1973): 142.

36 Mathias Bernath, "Nationalstaatsbildung in Südosteuropa als Teil eines gesamteuropäischen Geschichtsprozesses," *Südosteuropa-Mitteilungen* 18 (1978): 3–11.

37 Dietmar Müller, "Southeastern Europe as a Historical Meso-Region: Constructing Space in Twentieth-Century German Historiography," *European Review of History* 10, no. 2 (2003): 394.

38 Peter Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977).

region includes only the relatively small countries in this space. Furthermore, Southeast European studies deals with the zone of Ottoman-Habsburg conflicts and the lands that belonged to these two empires consecutively, but not with former Ottoman possessions and tributary territories that were obtained by Russia and later remained part of the Soviet Union. The paradox is that according to formal geographical criteria, Crimea and especially the Caucasus are located precisely in the southeastern part of the European continent; obviously, they are also located southeast of Germany. In other words, the concept of Southeastern Europe is very close to the concepts of "the Balkan peninsula" and "the Balkans," although scholars usually discuss the differences between them.

In the case of Southeast European studies, the center of interest moves north, which in certain cases involves paying less attention to and even omitting some countries in the southern part of the region. A good example is a short overview of Southeastern Europe by the Hungarian linguist and literary historian Gyula Farkas. He includes in the region Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria and leaves aside not only Turkey (as belonging mostly to the Middle East) but also Greece and Albania, which in his view are more properly regarded as Mediterranean countries.[39]

At first glance, the proportion of the more heavily Orientalized Balkan space diminishes in the framework of the larger region called Southeastern Europe, and encourages one even more to see the region in European context. In practical terms, in this larger perspective the presence of a smaller Balkan nucleus reappears. In addition, Southeastern Europe is regarded as a working concept, while the Balkans are a "historical region" with its own individuality and distinctiveness—from the name "Balkans" have come a number of derivatives that designate various realia allegedly typical of the region, from "Balkan nationalism" and "Balkan mentality" to "Balkan music" and "Balkan cuisine." At the same time, all the countries that are regarded as "Southeast European" without being "Balkan" (Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, and in many cases Romania) could also be classified as "Central European," or at least many people in these countries would prefer them to be. In this way, even in the studies of Southeastern Europe, what ultimately appears in the foreground is the Balkans.

39 Julius von Farkas, *Südosteuropa. Ein Überblick* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), 5.

The Balkans or the Balkan States and the Balkan Peoples

As has already become clear, in many cases the problem of the spatial dimensions of the Balkans is reformulated as a question of which countries are part of the region. In fact, most general works on the Balkans define the spatial scope of the object of their study by listing the countries they examine. Such definitions are found in the aforementioned books on Balkan geography, which do not discuss the trivial question of the region's "borders."[40] In certain cases the presentation is organized on a country-by-country basis.[41] This approach is also widely adopted in historical studies, and once again the starting point in the search for definition is the present-day political map. In *The Balkans* Barbara and Charles Jelavich list the examined countries in alphabetical order: "This book concerns the history of five modern nations—Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia—all located on the Balkan peninsula."[42] In another well-known book, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804–1920*, the same authors announce that they are examining "the modern history of seven Balkan peoples." However, this does not involve any territorial change to the previously quoted definition—they list the peoples of the same states, but instead of "Yugoslavs," they separately list Croatians, Serbians, and Slovenes, as if repeating the country's pre-1929 name (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) in English-language alphabetical order.[43] In their *Balkan Economic History*, Lampe and Jackson name the same five countries—the study "covers the territories of Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia and Albania."[44] The contemporary political map turned out to be more important than the physical geography and the imperial borders of the past even for Francis Carter's *Historical Geography of the Balkans*: "for the purposes of this book the Balkans

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40 Blanc, *Géographie des Balkans*, 6. This approach Blanc justifies by citing the increased role of the nation-state: ". . . à une époque où plus que jamais l'Europe est divisée en Etat aux frontières étanches, où l'économie est liée aux structures institutionnelles, il faut se résoudre à adopter une convention et traiter dans l'ensemble les cinq Etats qui composent la masse péninsulaire: Yougoslavie, Grèce, Bulgarie, Albanie, auquel il faut ajouter la Thrace turque."

41 Ancel, *Peuples et Nations des Balkans*; Péchoux and Sivignon, *Les Balkans*, 117 ff.

42 Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The Balkans* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1965), vii. Barbara Jelavich repeated this definition in her 1983 book *History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, vol. 1, ix.

43 Charles and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States: 1804–1920* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1977), ix.

44 Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, 1. This is also visible on maps in the volume: facing pp. 1, 154, and 324.

are defined as that territory covering the modern states of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Yugoslavia, along with the area known as European Turkey."[45]

This is not only an easier and more pragmatic way to define the borders of the region but also reflects the logic on which general historical studies of the Balkans are based—they actually present the history of the "Balkan states" and the "Balkan peoples." The synthesis of Balkan history is in fact an aggregate of national histories of the countries in the region and largely reflects the achievements and shortcomings of the respective historiographical schools. Some studies simply present the Balkan countries one after the other.[46]

The approach of defining the spatial scope of the region by listing the countries it embraces is even more pronounced in the case of Southeastern Europe, which simply adds Hungary and in some cases Slovakia (even when it was still part of Czechoslovakia), as it was part of the Kingdom of Hungary during the Middle Ages, as well as after the Compromise of 1867. At a very late stage, Cyprus also started to be considered a Balkan (or Southeast European) country, related to the perception that it was a "Greek" island.[47] In the same way, in the distant past there were doubts whether Crete belonged to the Balkans (and more generally to Europe); these ended with the island's annexation to Greece in the early twentieth century.[48]

In general, geography books consider Bulgaria, Albania, Greece, and Yugoslavia during its existence (1918–1992) to be the countries "in the Balkans." The case of Greece is more peculiar: it is regarded as part of the peninsula geographically,[49] but certain works omit it,[50] while some authors include it only after stressing that it is actually a Mediterranean or, more precisely, an

45 Carter, "Introduction to the Balkan Scene," 1.

46 William Miller, *The Balkans: Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia, and Montenegro* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1899; 1st ed., 1896); Nevill Forbes, Arnold J. Toynbee, D. Mitrany, and D.G. Hogarth, *The Balkans: A History of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Rumania, Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1915), etc.

47 Cyprus is presented in the last volume of the series *Südosteuropa-Handbuch*, vols. 1–8, eds. Klaus-Detlev Grothusen et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975–1998). Even so, geographically the island is not considered part of the Balkan peninsula: cf. Beshevliev, "Opredelyane na geografskoto ponyatie 'Balkanski poluostrov,'" 19 and 26, footnote 74.

48 Albrecht Wirth, *Der Balkan. Seine Länder und Völker in Geschichte, Kultur, Politik, Volkswirtschaft und Weltverkehr* (Stuttgart, Berlin, and Leipzig: Union Deutsche Verlagsgeselschaft, 1914), 13.

49 Ancel, *Peuples et Nations des Balkans*; Blanc, *Géographie des Balkans*; Péchoux and Sivignon, *Les Balkans*, etc.

50 Lux, *Die Balkanhalbinsel* (*mit Ausschluss von Griechenland*); Miller, *The Balkans: Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia, and Montenegro*.

"eastern Mediterranean" country.[51] Thus in more restrictive interpretations, the Balkan countries could be reduced to only three—Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia—while the neighboring countries are considered only from a comparative perspective.[52] In rare cases Albania is also omitted, on the grounds that it is a "Mediterranean" country.[53] But in many works on the Balkans, Albania remains underrepresented simply because, for a long period, it was the least-known and least-studied state in the region. For instance, there is no article on Albania in the *Historical Geography of the Balkans*, edited by Francis Carter.

Another important and often-encountered problem is related to Romania. Geographically most of the country is located outside the Balkan peninsula (according to the currently prevailing definition), but historically it was closely related to the Balkans, and specifically to the imperial capital, Constantinople (including in the nineteenth century). Hence, while works on the geography of the Balkans by definition stop at the Danube and, concerning political and human geography, might even omit Northern Dobrudja,[54] most historical studies include Romania, as well as the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. Along with the cases of Stavrianos and Lampe and Jackson cited above, Georges Castellan also indicates the Danube as a geographical boundary but generally accepts that, historically, the Romanian principalities were part of the Balkans.[55] Actually, the same is true of studies of human geography and historical geography.[56] In some cases, Romania is treated only briefly, precisely because its belonging to the region is questionable,[57] or, according to a similar view, because it was "tied more closely to the other Danubian states."[58] In general, Wallachia and Moldavia (respectively Romania) are considered part of "the Balkans," just as they used to be seen as part of "European Turkey." This is one of the most important differences between "the Balkans" in history studies and "the Balkan peninsula" in geography studies.

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51 Jelavich and Jelavich, *The Balkans*, vii.

52 Hoffman, *The Balkans in Transition*, 3, 11.

53 Farkas, *Südosteuropa.*

54 Blanc, *Géographie des Balkans*, 6, 46, 56–57; Péchoux and Sivignon, *Les Balkans*, 25–26, 38–39.

55 Castellan, *Histoire des Balkans*, 17: "au nord, la géographie impose la frontière du Danube, mais l'histoire y inclut les pays romains, en symbiose, il est vrai, avec l'Europe centrale et les plaines russes."

56 Ancel, *Peuples et Nations des Balkans*; Carter, *An Historical Geography of the Balkans*.

57 Wirth (*Der Balkan*, 13, 293–296) discusses the arguments over whether Romania should be considered part of the Balkans but then only briefly discusses the country.

58 Jelavich and Jelavich, *The Balkans*, vii.

Still, even concerning historical studies, the decision to consider Romania one of the Balkan countries needs additional clarifications. The question is to what extent the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, which preserved their autonomy and had no Muslim inhabitants, could be studied side-by-side with the other Ottoman provinces in Europe, which were under the full control of the empire. On the one hand, the Danubian principalities simply could not be included in more specialized studies on Ottoman provincial history based on land, tax, and/or judicial registers, which are otherwise available for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Hungary. Tellingly, in Romania, studies on the Ottoman Empire (with the exception of those on Dobrudja) have a different profile than those in the other Balkan countries. They deal mostly with the foreign policies of the empire, the military campaigns, the diplomatic relations and treaties, the legal status of the tributary territories, and so on. On the other hand, due to their autonomy, the Danubian principalities, and later on unified Romania, are in a situation much more similar to the post-Ottoman space in the Balkans than to the lands included in the Habsburg and Russian Empires until World War I. That logically makes Wallachia and Moldavia, respectively Romania, an object of all historical studies on the "long nineteenth century" of the Balkan countries.

A number of studies on the post-World War II period omit Greece and Turkey, because they focus on communist countries. This choice is often supported by additional arguments, namely that Greece is instead a Mediterranean country, while most of Turkey's territory is located outside the Balkans, in the Middle East.[59] Interestingly, the differentiation between communist and non-communist countries coincides with the specialization in the academic field. In many cases there are separate research units and teaching chairs in Byzantine, Greek, and Modern Greek studies, as well as in Ottoman studies and Turkology, while most of the other parts of the Balkans (Yugoslavia and Bulgaria) are in the sphere of interest of experts in Slavic studies. That led in some cases to the writing of "histories of the Balkans" that excluded Greece and Turkey, as, for instance, in a book by Edgar Hösch.[60]

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59 Robert Lee Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Time*, revised edition (New York and London: Norton & Co., 1978; 1st ed., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956), 8. Citations are to the 1978 edition.

60 Edgar Hösch, *The Balkans: A Short History from the Greek Times to the Present Day* (London: Faber & Faber, 1972; 1st ed. in German, 1968) A later edition of the book includes Greece and the Ottoman Empire: Edgar Hösch, *Geschichte der Balkanländer. Von der Frühzeit bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1988). Cf. Hall and Danta, *Reconstructing the Balkans*, 6.

As already mentioned, the fact that the region is studied through the prism of its national states obliges scholars to cross the Danube-Sava line in order to include all of the former Yugoslavia and, in most cases, Romania (on rare occasions, overviews of the Balkans leave out Northern Dobrudja). Therefore it became impossible to concentrate only on the Ottoman domination and legacy in the region, and historical studies also consider largely the Habsburg lands even when the research is limited to "the Balkans" or the field of Balkan studies. At the same time, this demonstrates how profound the consequences are of the tradition of studying the region on a country-by-country basis.

A basic methodological question in Balkan studies is whether to define the scope of the region according to the present-day borders or to take into account historical legacies and therefore the former imperial borders. In theory, priority is given to historical and cultural criteria; in practice, the country-by-country approach remains dominant, and the studies are usually conducted pursuant to the current political borders. Needless to say, this is particularly problematic for historical studies, but at the same time, the regional differences within the individual Balkan countries are neglected, and the delineation of the area as a whole becomes extremely inexact. In some cases, typically "Balkan" regions such as Northern Greece, Eastern Thrace, and Northern Dobrudja are left aside, while Dalmatia and Slovenia are often included.

Concerning the inclusion of individual countries in the region, the main difference between the Balkans and Southeastern Europe is that Hungary is included in the definition of Southeastern Europe[61] but is very rarely considered part of the Balkans. Still, the fact that Yugoslavia and Romania within their 1918 borders are regarded as "Balkan" allows us a different perspective on the inclusion of Hungary in the region, independently of what it is called. If "the Balkans" consist of parts of the former Kingdom of Hungary such as Transylvania, Vojvodina, and Croatia, it is no longer so unthinkable to include present-day Hungary as well. This example shows once again that the study of the region on the basis of the national states included in it leads to unforeseen consequences.

The attempts to examine the subdivisions of the region are also revealing regarding the role of the country-by-country approach in studying the Balkans. In the nineteenth century, descriptions of European Turkey often followed the regional units known from ancient times (such as Macedonia, Illyricum, Moesia, Thrace, and Greece), while some subdivided the peninsula in two parts, north and south of the Balkan mountain range. In modern academic studies, the work of Jovan Cvijić has been pioneering in this regard.

61 *Südosteuropa-Handbuch*, vol. 5.

Cvijić relied partly on geographical criteria but mostly on historical and cultural criteria (the consecutive imperial dominations and foreign influences) in order to create a rather complicated scheme of the "zones of civilization" in the Balkans. What is special about this scheme is that it delineates a separate zone of old Balkan (Byzantine) civilization from the zone of Turkish-Oriental influences (instead of seeing them as consecutive layers on the same territory). It also delimits a separate zone of patriarchal culture (despite the fact that these territories were also for a long time under Ottoman rule). And finally, along the zone of "Western civilization," it identifies several less important areas.[62] Some other attempts to subdivide the region differed in approach and the number of sub-units: Milovan Gavazzi, for instance, identified twelve zones on the basis of traditional culture.[63] Still, most other authors remain closer to the typology and the overall number of regions in the scheme proposed by Cvijić. André Blanc, for example, distinguished in his short *Geography of the Balkans* a relatively clearly defined Germanic, Mediterranean, and Byzantine area ("*domaine de Byzance*") and a "patriarchal" zone (in terms of Cvijić) already too modernized to be referred to in this way. In addition, he mentions the traces of Islamic domination ("*empreinte islamique*").[64] Edgar Hösch, who builds on Cvijić and other scholars like Gerhard Gesemann, Milovan Gavazzi, Josef Matl, and Alois Schmaus, reduced the scheme to four zones—an "area of Balkan-Byzantine culture with a strong Oriental element"; the Western Balkans, "typified by a patriarchal way of life"; "a zone with Italo-Slav Adriatic culture" along the western coast of the peninsula; and a transitional zone to Central Europe, including "north-east Slovenia, north Croatia, Slavonia, Srem, Vojvodina (Baranja, Bačka, and Banat)."[65] This scheme is often quoted, although it does not cover the whole region: it ignores Romania (despite the fact that Hösch presents it in his book) and Greece (which is not included in the first editions of the book, in German in 1968 and in English in 1972, but appears in the following ones, without any revision of this paragraph). If this line of reasoning is followed, Southern Greece and the Aegean Islands should be counted as another separate area. The point is that despite all these attempts and others, studies of the Balkans are subdivided only according to nations/national states; this is true even of Edgar Hösch's book. This demonstrates once again to what extent

62 Jovan Cvijić, "The Zones of Civilization of the Balkan Peninsula," *Geographical Review* 5, no. 6 (1918): 470–482.

63 Gavazzi, "Die Kulturgeographische Gliederung Südosteuropas," 45–47.

64 Blanc, *Géographie des Balkans*, 35–38.

65 Hösch, *The Balkans*, 21–22.

Balkan history is seen as an aggregate of national histories of the countries and peoples that are considered part of the region.

Aside from the northern border, there is one more problem with the region's spatial limits. This problem is related to Turkey, and it stems from the fact that the borders of the peninsula do not coincide with the national borders. When a clear definition is provided, it usually states that the Balkans (and likewise Southeastern Europe) include only the European part of Turkey.[66] The straits of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles are the only border of physical geography that, at least in some cases, is regarded as more important than the political borders—no other "Balkan" country is subdivided in such a drastic way. Still, this definition inevitably clashes with the tradition of studying the region as an aggregate of national states. Usually this problem is not addressed explicitly and authors simply choose (sometimes even tacitly) between the two possible solutions—to include Turkey or not.

On the one hand, research institutes dedicated to the Balkans or Southeastern Europe in general list Turkey among the countries they are supposed to study. On the other hand, their projects and published works usually consider Turkey a "Balkan" state (they present its political history, institutions at the central level, policies, relations with neighboring countries, etc.) but usually do not cover its entire territory, which obviously lies outside "the Balkans." Only some authors explicitly treat the Anatolian part of the country as part of Southeastern Europe.[67]

At the same time, most published works on general Balkan history simply leave modern Turkey aside. This is the case for the above-quoted books by Jacques Ancel (1926),[68] Leften Stavrianos (1958), Lampe and Jackson (1982), Barbara Jelavich (1983), Edgar Hösch (1988), and others: they cover Ottoman rule over the Balkans but not Turkey (not even its European part in Eastern Thrace) after World War I. Stavrianos, for instance, who presents in great detail earlier Ottoman history, ends with the Tanzimat period and does not examine as a separate issue even the rule of Abdulhamid II.[69]

The question here is not whether the Balkans includes one more country but what the basis is for the study of the region and its past. All these studies share the perception that the Balkans are an European region that fell for

66 Blanc, *Géographie des Balkans*, 6; Carter, "Introduction to the Balkan Scene," 1, etc.

67 Bernath, "Südosteuropäische Geschichte als gesonderte Disziplin," 142.

68 Here even the Ottoman Empire and Islam are very briefly presented: Ancel, *Peuples et Nations des Balkans*, 100–104.

69 Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453*. In the respective part, the author includes only a subchapter about "Albania under the Turks" (ibid., 496 ff).

centuries under a foreign power, a power from "outside" that is not Balkan itself.[70] Therefore they study the territories (and nations) that were "under Ottoman rule," but not so much the "Ottomans"/"Turks" themselves, who are regarded as an alien element related to the imposed political superstructure. After this superstructure disappeared, the "Turks" (and Turkey) could be omitted completely. Accordingly, studies on the Balkans during the Ottoman period deal not so much with the history of the empire at the central level but mostly with its administration and impact on the provinces, i.e., again with an "outside" rule over the region. This could be considered not an Ottoman-centered but an anti-Ottoman-centered approach to the Balkans, and that leads to the discarding of contemporary Turkey.

The paradox is that the Turkish point of view coincides with this interpretation. For traditional Turkish historiography, it is not Turkey that belongs to the Balkans but the Balkans that once belonged to the Ottoman Empire. Still, Ottoman studies in Turkey are interested primarily in the territories that later remained part of the new republic, and pay much less attention to Rumelia and the other "European" provinces of the empire. As for the contemporary Balkans, they occupy only a marginal place in Turkish academic research and published works. As in the other Balkan states, this field is dominated by two main problems: bilateral relations and the fate of the Turkish/Muslim minorities in the respective countries.[71]

There is one more reason that certain Balkan countries are omitted from general overviews of the region's history, but it is of a very different nature: authors from the region writing these overviews often do not present their own country. This is the case not only in countries whose elites refuse to be called "Balkan"—a view that dominates in Romania and to a certain extent in Greece, but also in works on the general history of the Balkans published in Bulgaria.[72] The reason is that Balkan studies in the countries from the region are devoted to the study of the neighboring countries, the conflicts, and the bilateral relations with them, as well as with the co-national communities

70 E.g., Jelavich and Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States*, x: "... the historical continuity of Balkan national development was interrupted by a long period of subjugation to outside rule.... we will be dealing with the national development of peoples with a long historical heritage, whose political evolution was halted by a foreign conquest."

71 Sylvie Gangloff, "Les Balkans vus depuis la Turquie: état des lieux des dernières publications," *Balkanologie* 9, nos. 1–2 (2005): 314.

72 Strashimir Dimitrov and Krăstyo Manchev, *Istoriya na balkanskite narodi*, vol. 1 (*XV–XIX v.*) (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1971); vol. 2 (*1879–1918*) (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1975).

outside the national borders. As a result, the research agenda of every national historiography from the region is materialized in a respective national school of Balkan studies.[73] In these cases, works in Balkan studies turn out to be a continuation of the respective national history, treating very much the same problematic but as a *sui generis* history of the national periphery. This is one more indication that in these cases, the Balkans are perceived and studied not as an entity but mainly from the perspective of one's own national state and its history. Of course, this is the case with studies for domestic audiences; in works targeting international audiences, authors with expertise in Balkan studies from the region most often write about their own country.

Imagining the Balkans as Part of Europe

Balkan studies in the 1990s were profoundly marked by a wave of published works that critically analyzed the negative stereotypes about the region. They demonstrated how the Balkans had been transformed into a black sheep for the Western (European) world, starting with the bitter comments of various foreign travelers in the past and ending with some superficial and stigmatizing generalizations during the wars in the former Yugoslavia.[74] These works became enormously popular in the region itself, coinciding with local frustration over the delays these countries faced in admission to the European Union.

The discussion of negative stereotypes about the Balkans also has a certain relevance for the debate over the Balkans as an analytical category, and some authors have made particular contributions to this topic.[75] Most importantly, a number of scholars criticized the essentialization, stigmatization,

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73 On the national schools in Balkan studies, see Diana Mishkova's contribution to this volume.

74 John Allcock, "Constructing the Balkans," in *Black Lambs and Grey Falcons: Women Travellers in the Balkans*, eds. John Allcock and Antonia Young (Bradford: Bradford University Press, 1991), 170–191; Milica Bakic-Hayden and Robert M. Hayden, "Orientalist Variations on the Theme 'Balkans': Symbolic Geography in Recent Yugoslav Cultural Politics," *Slavic Review* 51, no. 1 (1992): 1–15; Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), etc.

75 Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis, "South-Eastern Europe: History, Concepts, Boundaries," *Balkanologie* 3, no. 2 (1999): 47–66; Drace-Francis, "Zür Geschichte des Südosteuropakonzepts bis 1914," 275–286; Holm Sundhaussen, "Europa Balcanica. Der Balkan als historisches Raum Europas," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 25, no. 4 (1999): 626–653; Holm Sundhaussen, "Was ist Südosteuropa und warum beschäftigen wir uns (nicht) damit?" *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen* 42, no. 5–6 (2002): 93–105; Maria Todorova, "Der Balkan als Analysekategorie: Grenzen, Raum, Zeit," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 3 (2002): 469–492; Müller, "Southeastern Europe as a Historical Meso-Region," 393–408, etc.

and exoticization of the Balkans and called for this region to be studied in the larger European context, just like any other part of the continent. On many occasions it was stressed that the differences between the Balkans (respectively Southeastern Europe) and the rest of Europe should not be overestimated and that there were no "impenetrable cultural frontiers,"[76] "no wall" separating the different parts of Europe.[77]

The end result was that scholars became much more cautious about the very idea that the Balkans were neatly separated from the rest of Europe. Not without a sense of humor, Wendy Bracewell and Alexander Drace-Francis summarized: "There is no generally agreed definition of South-Eastern Europe, but there are many reasons for this uncertainty. The most banal reason is that Europe is not symmetrical in shape, and therefore does not lend itself with ease to division according to the points of the compass."[78] In the 2002 edition of his introduction to Southeast European history, Karl Kaser went even further. He questioned the very notion of Southeastern Europe and suggested using "European Southeast" instead, on the grounds that it was not possible to speak of a region clearly delineated from the rest of the continent.[79]

Actually, the discussions placed much more attention on the symbolism behind the names "Balkans" and "Southeastern Europe" (as well as, in certain cases, the German *Südost*) than on the spatial scope and the borders of the region. Still, the debate reached the point of problematizing the very perception of the "Balkan peninsula" as a fact of physical geography and a pre-existing and clearly defined entity. Previous works mostly included comments about the conventionality of the northern border of the Balkans and the misunderstandings related to the choice of its name.[80] At this stage various authors insisted that not only the name "Balkan" but the very perception of this territory as one region constituting a "peninsula" was a relatively recent phenomenon. First of all, it was highlighted that in the past, what is now the Balkans was not perceived as one single spatial unit—the Romans, for example, called the

76 Paschalis Kitromilides, *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy: Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of South-Eastern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, Variorum, 1994), xiii–xiv.

77 Paulos Tzermias, "Die historische Stellung des Balkan innerhalb Europas," *Südosteuropa* 49, nos. 1–2 (2000): 89.

78 Wendy Bracewell and Alexander Drace-Francis, "South-Eastern Europe: History, Concepts, Boundaries," *Balkanologie* 3, no. 2 (1999): 47.

79 Karl Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte und Geschichtswissenschaft*, 2nd ed. (Vienna: Böhlau, 2002), 22–24.

80 Wirth, *Der Balkan*, 14; Cvijić, *Balkansko poluostrvo*, 14–15, etc.

western part Illyricum and the eastern part Thrace.[81] Therefore the question is not only about the name but about whether people used one name for the entire region: "Not only was the word 'Balkan' not used until relatively recently but no single geographical term was applied to the whole territory we now call the Balkan peninsula."[82] Alexander Drace-Francis stresses that the region was not known as a "peninsula" in ancient times and for a long time had no specific designation. He also remarks that the physical distance between Trieste and Kiel is shorter than that between Trieste and Konstanța; in other words, the existence of a peninsula in Southeast Europe is not self-evident.[83] As a matter of fact, even a glimpse at geographical and cartographical works from ancient times (Strabo, Ptolemy, etc.) demonstrates that in such texts, the description of the present-day "Balkans" does not define them as one single entity, while the term "peninsula" is used for much smaller areas, partly detached from the continental landmass such as Gallipoli, Euboea, and Tauris (Crimea). There is no equivalent of the present-day Balkan peninsula in the medieval Byzantine or Slavic manuscripts that have geographical descriptions, or in descriptions by medieval authors who worked outside the region.[84] This is still the case in geographic studies from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, which refer only to European Turkey.[85] Initially, some recognized "Greece" (including not only Morea/the Peloponnese, which was recognized as a peninsula anyway, but also Central Greece) as a peninsula but without a clearly defined northern

81 Traian Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds: The First and Last Europe* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), 1–2. See also Božidar Jezernik, "Europe and Its Other (i.e., the Balkans)," *Perifèria: revista de recerca i formació en atropologia* 6 (2007): 1, http://revistes.uab.cat/periferia/article/view/170: "For centuries the Balkan Peninsula had no name. Only in 1808 did the German geographer August Zeune give it the name of Hämushalbinsel, which he subsequently changed to the Balkan Peninsula . . ."

82 Hall and Danta, *Reconstructing the Balkans*, 3–4.

83 Drace-Francis, "Zür Geschichte des Südosteuropakonzepts bis 1914," 275.

84 Ivan Duychev, "Geografski opisaniya v srednovekovnata bălgarska knizhnina," in *Sbornik v chest na akademik Nikola V. Mihov: po sluchay osemdesetgodishninata mu*, eds. Sava Ganovski and Todor Borov (Sofia: BAN, 1959), 157–170 = *Prouchvaniya vărhu srednovekovnata bălgarska istoriya i kultura* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1981), 258–271; Anisava Miltenova, ed., *Stara bălgarska literatura*, vol. 5, *Estestvoznanie* (Sofia: Bălgarski pisatel, 1992), 77–151; Vasil Gyuzelev, *Bălgariya e ogromna oblast i mnogobroen narod. Zemya na blazheni. Srednovekovni geografski săchineniya za bălgarskite zemi i bălgarite* (*IV–XIV в.*) (Sofia: Paradigma, 2012), etc.

85 Edme Mentelle, *Turquie d'Europe* (Paris: Nyon, 1779); John Pinkerton, *Modern Geography*, vol. 1 (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1811), 314 ff., etc.

border.[86] Even some leading nineteenth-century scholars like Ami Boué and Auguste Viquesnel speak of European Turkey without using the concept of a peninsula for the whole of its territory.[87] Some authors of that time mention only in passing that European Turkey might be regarded as a peninsula.[88]

In sharp contrast with this, some previous works presumed too much in discussing what was known about "the Balkan peninsula" during ancient times and the Middle Ages. Obviously these territories were described and mapped by various authors in the past, but the question is whether and at what point the lands in question started to be perceived as one single and clearly delineated region, and also as a "peninsula." Georg Stadtmüller, for instance, wrote that in ancient times, the region was called the Haemus peninsula (*Haemus-Halbinsel*),[89] seemingly following the logic that the peninsula was named after the mountain range in question, which was then known as "Haemus." Even in the recent *History of Southeastern Europe* by Konrad Clewing and Oliver Jens Schmitt, the editors wrote that, following the geographers from ancient times, the Byzantines in the sixth century saw the region as one peninsula (again, the Haimos/Haemus Peninsula) with its northern border on the Danube.[90] Some even regarded the various names of the peninsula, invented during the nineteenth century, as its old names before the Ottoman

86 Adam Christian Gaspari, *Lehrbuch der Erdbeschreibung*, vol. 2 (Weimar: Industrie-Comptoirs, 1801), 221.

87 Ami Boué, *La Turquie d'Europe ou observations sur la géographie, la géologie, l'histoire naturelle, la statistique, les moeurs, les coutumes, l'archéologie, l'agriculture, l'industrie, le commerce, les gouvernements divers, le clergé, l'histoire et l'état politique de cet empire*, vols. 1–4 (Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1840); Auguste Viquesnel, *Voyage dans la Turquie d'Europe: description physique et géologique de la Thrace*, vols. 1–2 (Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1868).

88 Eugène Cortambert, *Géographie universelle: ou, description générale de la terre* (Paris: A.J. Kilian, Ch. Picquet, 1826): the author describes "Turquie d'Europe" (214ff.) and only at one point mentions that this territory "peut elle-même être considérée comme une péninsule" (219).

89 Stadtmüller, *Geschichte Südosteuropas*, 13.

90 *Geschichte Südosteuropas. Vom frühen Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, eds. Konrad Clewing and Oliver Jens Schmitt (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2011), 8. Actually, the Danube was simply the northern border of the Byzantine possessions at that time. As for the name "Haemus peninsula," it appears in early nineteenth-century texts as an synonym for "Balkan peninsula": August Zeune, *Erdansichten oder Abriss einer Geschichte der Erdkunde* (Berlin: Maurer, 1815), 103, 111, 139. On p. 139, Zeune refers to the 1811 edition of *Geographie für Real- und Bürger -Schulen nach Naturgrenzen* by C.G.D. Stein, who used the term "Hämushalbinsel."

rule.[91] Such interpretations notwithstanding, the prevailing opinion today is that the region was not always perceived as one single unit and therefore did not have a specific name for its entirety, and even that "the Balkan peninsula" is not a fact of physical geography but a modern interpretation.

The increasing awareness that the notion of a "Balkan peninsula" was a relatively recent one led historians to rediscover the importance of the term that preceded it—"European Turkey"—as well as the crucial role of Ottoman domination, and the Ottoman heritage, as criteria for belonging to this region. Mark Mazower starts his short history of the Balkans (2000) by underlining the paradox: "At the end of the twentieth century, people spoke as if the Balkans had existed for ever. Two hundred years earlier, they had not yet come into being. It was not the Balkans but 'Rumeli' that the Ottomans ruled."[92] Instead of speculations about the complicated history of the region from prehistoric times to the present, the emphasis was on the characteristics from the era of imperial domination that shaped the region and gave it the traits that most distinguished it from the rest of Europe. That was a key element of the debates in the 1990s. The emphasis on the role of the Ottoman Empire and its heritage was the turn that closed the circle: during the nineteenth century, the designation "Balkans"/"Balkan peninsula" replaced (seemingly for good) "European Turkey," but then various scholars started to underline that the Ottoman legacy was the defining characteristic of the Balkans and even that "the Balkans are the Ottoman legacy."[93] From this perspective it was no longer important whether the region in question was a peninsula and what its precise borders were, but rather what "European" territories were under Ottoman rule for a sufficient length of time. It should be added that underlining the importance of the Ottoman legacy might serve two completely different aims. In general, this is done to give due attention to the Ottoman influence, which was often downplayed or seen only in negative terms. In other cases this is related to an ambition to "normalize" the Balkans by reducing the important differences from the rest of Europe to this foreign domination.

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91 Predrag Matvejević, "Des Balkans," *Cahiers balkaniques* 36–37 (2008): 1: "Dans le passé, ils avaient également pour nom péninsule Illyrienne, Grecque, Byzantine et, il y a un peu plus d'un siècle, 'Turquie d'Europe': ceci révèle, entre autres, les diverses attributions ou appartenances de ces territoires." The fallacy is even more clearly formulated in the English abstract: "their name [i.e., the name of the Balkans] has changed more than once during the course of history: starting as Illyrian peninsula, it was then transformed into Greek, then Byzantine peninsula while recently it is known as 'European Turkey.'"

92 Mark Mazower, *The Balkans: From the End of Byzantium to the Present Day* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2000), 1.

93 Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 12, 161–183.

The approach toward the naming of the region also changed accordingly. Initially, it seems, there was a trend to substitute whenever possible the disreputable term "Balkans" with the ostensibly neutral "Southeastern Europe." For the same reasons, some scholars even proposed changing the name of the peninsula (like others did on so many occasions in the past)—for instance, to "Danubian peninsula."[94] John Lampe speaks of the transformation of the traditional Balkans into modernized Southeastern Europe.[95] Still, on the whole the view prevailed that the problem was not the name "Balkan" but the negative stereotypes related to it, and therefore there was no need to change the name of the region; what was needed was to address the stereotypes in order to overcome them. Thus leading scholars tried to rehabilitate the Balkans by stressing the intrinsic Europeanness of the region. Even the titles of some works of that time express this eloquently: for Traian Stoianovich the Balkans are *The First and Last Europe*,[96] and Bernard Lory named his book about the post-1945 Balkans *The Balkan Europe*.[97] Similarly, a few years later Holm Sundhaussen wrote about "Europa Balcanica," and it is noteworthy that the denominations "Europe" and "Balkans" appear twice, side by side, in the otherwise not-so-long title of this important article.[98]

In addition, a number of intellectuals from the region not only refuted the "stereotypes" about the Balkans but also started proudly identifying with this designation. Some insisted on the importance of ancient cultures in the region, others on the medieval Byzantino-Slavic civilization (presented as superior to that of Western Europe at that time). Many argued that the region had a long and impressive record of peaceful cohabitation and a tradition of religious tolerance that Western Europe could be envious of. Even Andrei Pleşu, who regards his own country as being located outside the Balkans proper, says that for him, "Balkanism" has a rather positive connotation.[99] In general, that

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94 Ivan Părvev, "'Iztochen văpros' i 'Balkanski poluostrov.' Mezhdu traditsiya i istoricheska pretsiznost," in *Moderniyat istoriki. Văobrazhenie, informiranost, pokoleniya: sbornik v chest na 60–godishninata na prof. Andrey Pantev*, eds. K. Grozev and Todor Popnedelev (Sofia: Daniela Ubenova, 1999), 265–266.

95 John R. Lampe, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe: A Century of War and Transition* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

96 Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds*.

97 Bernard Lory, *L'Europe balkanique de 1945 à nos jours* (Paris: Ellipses, 1996).

98 Holm Sundhaussen, "Europa Balcanica. Der Balkan als historisches Raum Europas," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 25, no. 4 (1999): 626–653.

99 Andrei Pleşu, "Pourquoi doit-on sauver les Balkans?" *Martor* 7 (2002): http://martor.memoria.ro/?location=view_article&id=130, accessed October 6, 2013: "le balkanisme a pour moi une connotation plutôt positive."

counterbalanced the tendency in several countries to deny being part of the region and helped reinforce the perception of the Balkans as a regional unit deserving special attention.

Underlining that the Balkans undisputedly belong to Europe was one more reason to downplay and even dismiss the question about the border between the region and the rest of the continent. At that time scholars seemed less interested than ever before in the disputes about the precise borders of the peninsula and the role of the rivers Una, Kupa, and Soča. Instead they preferred to briefly list the states or nations that were part of the region. This was the approach taken, for example, by Bernard Lory, who pointed out that two centuries of attempts to define the Balkans had been fruitless. Therefore, he chose a "purely pragmatic" approach—to present "the five countries that occupy the European Southeast, namely Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia."[100] Several other authors proceeded in a similar manner—Stevan Pavlowitch (1999), Richard Crampton (2002), and John Lampe (2006) included in their respective books the same five countries.[101] Even Maria Todorova, who made a fairly detailed overview of the previous debates about the borders of the Balkans, simply listed the peoples she considered "Balkan" in her book.[102]

The disintegration of Yugoslavia made it possible in some cases to treat the republics of the former federation separately. In such a case, many authors were inclined to leave Slovenia outside the Balkan countries.[103] Similarly, many insisted that Croatia was not a "Balkan" country either, but in fact, it is

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100 Lory, *L'Europe balkanique*, 3: "Donner une définition des Balkans est un exercice auquel géographes, ethnologues, historiens, linguistes, etc. se livrent depuis deux siècles sans parvenir à s'entendre. L'approche du présent ouvrage est purement pragmatique: il concerne les cinq États constitués qui occupent le Sud-Est européen dans la seconde moitié du XX^{e} siècle: Albanie, Bulgarie, Grèce, Roumanie et Yugoslavie."

101 Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans 1804–1945* (London and New York: Longman, 1999); Richard J. Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War* (London and New York: Longman, 2002), xiv; Lampe, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe*.

102 Todorova, *Imagining*, 31: "this book covers as Balkan Albanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Romanians, and most of the former Yugoslavs. Slovenes, pace Cvijic, are not included, but Croats are. . . . With some qualification, Turks are also considered. . . ." See also Maria Todorova, "Der Balkan als Analysekategorie: Grenzen, Raum, Zeit," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 3 (2002): 477 (footnote 14).

103 Todorova, *Imagining*, 31 (Todorova later changed her mind and argued that Slovenia should be treated as part of former Yugoslavia: Todorova, "Der Balkan als Analysekategorie," 477); Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804–1999* (New York: Penguin, 2001); Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, *The Balkans: A Post-Communist History* (London: Routledge, 2007); Andrew B. Wachtel, *The Balkans in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press USA, 2008).

considered as such in works of history. The other independent states—Serbia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina are separately categorized as "Balkan."[104] Still, most studies of contemporary history continued to refer to "Yugoslavia" as a whole or, as Richard Crampton more precisely put it, "the territories which between 1944 and 1992 made up the [Socialist] Federal Republic of Yugoslavia."[105] At the same time, the breakup of the Soviet Union allowed the Republic of Moldova to be considered (alongside Romania) as part of Southeastern Europe. Likewise, the disintegration of Czechoslovakia made it that much easier to treat Slovakia alongside Hungary in this more extended regional framework.[106] In fact, Slovakia and Moldova account for only a tiny fraction of works on Southeast European studies. Even so, this enlargement of the region made using the terms "Balkans" and "Southeastern Europe" as synonyms even more problematic. As a result, German-speaking academic circles studying Southeastern Europe continued to distinguish between a smaller Balkan core and a transitional zone to Central Europe.[107]

There was also little progress on the other open questions regarding which countries were to be considered "Balkan." The problem of whether to include Romania among the Balkan countries remains unresolved. Without adding new arguments from either side, most scholars include it,[108] while some do not.[109] Concerning Turkey, the definition that the region includes only "European Turkey" remains valid;[110] at the same time, most scholars continue to omit Turkey in the coverage of the twentieth-century Balkans.[111] Finally,

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104 Bideleux and Jeffries, *The Balkans: A Post-Communist History.*

105 Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War*, xiv.

106 By no means do all works on Southeastern Europe of that time include Slovakia. See, e.g., *Südosteuropa: Gesellschaft, Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur: ein Handbuch*, eds. Magarditsch Hatschikjan and Stefan Troebst (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1999).

107 Sundhaussen, "Was ist Südosteuropa und warum beschäftigen wir uns (nicht) damit?" 99; *Geschichte Südosteuropas*, eds. Clewing and Schmitt, 2.

108 Lory, *L'Europe balkanique de 1945 à nos jours*; Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans, 1804–1945*; Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War*, Lampe, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe*; Glenny, *The Balkans*, etc.

109 Palairet, *The Balkan Economies*, 1997; Wachtel, *The Balkans in World History*.

110 Karl Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte und Geschichtswissenschaft*, 1st ed. (Vienna: Böhlau, 1990), 18, 85, and 103; Todorova, "Der Balkan als Analysekategorie," 477 (footnote 14); *Geschichte Südosteuropas*, eds. Clewing and Schmitt, 2.

111 Castellan, *Histoire des Balkans*; Lory, *L'Europe balkanique*, 3: "La Turquie, qui relève des Balkans pour 3% de son territoire (la Thrace orientale) n'est pas prise en compte ici"; Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans*; Glenny, *The Balkans*; Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War*; Tom Gallagher, *Outcast Europe: The Balkans, 1789–1989: From the Ottomans to Milošević* (London: Routledge, 2001); Tom Gallagher, *The Balkans after the Cold*

some authors from the Balkans write about the history of the region while omitting their own country.[112]

In sum, despite the sophisticated debates about the Balkans as an "analytical category" and the frequent use of terms like "mapping," "symbolic geography," and "mental maps," nothing substantial changed in the perception of the spatial dimensions and the borders of the Balkans. By contrast, the question itself is regarded as banal, and more often, authors limit themselves to a simple listing of the "Balkan countries." What is new here is that since the disintegration of Yugoslavia, at least twice as many "Balkan countries" must be listed. The only substantial change in the delineating of the Balkans—the exclusion of Slovenia, and in some cases also Croatia, from the definition of the region—results from this purely political transformation and not from any academic developments. The same is true of the cases in which independent Slovakia and Moldova are added in the attempts to define the spatial scope of Southeastern Europe.

The pitched debates from the 1990s and the first years of the new century had one unexpected side effect. The debates themselves were dominated by the ambition to prevent the further essentialization of the Balkans and, as Maria Todorova put it, to trivialize and normalize them. Many debates in the region were directly inspired by Todorova's work,[113] and those who were aware of the debate between Maria Todorova and Holm Sundhaussen did not hesitate to express support for Todorova's views,[114] often going even further in critiquing the Western imaginary about the region.

At the same time, many intellectuals in the region became enthusiastic about the study of the Balkans, and this academic interest received institutional and financial support. This led to a new boom in Balkan studies as an academic discipline devoted to the systematic study of the languages, history,

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War: From Tyranny to Tragedy (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 1: "All the states located in the Balkan peninsula, with the exception of Greece, had been under communist rule during the Cold War"; Lampe, *Balkans to Southeastern Europe*.

112 Maria Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Oi valkaniki laoi. Apo tin tourkiki kataktisi stin ethniki apokatastasi 140s–190s ai.* (Thessaloniki: Vanias, 1991); Spiridon Sfetas, *Eisagogi sti valkaniki istoria*, vols. 1–2 (Thessaloniki: Vanias, 2009, 2011).

113 E.g., "Table ronde: Les Balkans—traditions et changements. Crise des identités et communications interculturelles. Avec la participation d'Ivaylo Znepolski, Bogdan Bogdanov, Gueorgui Fotev, Ivaylo Ditchev, Svetlozar Igov," *Divinatio* 13 (2001): 191.

114 Alexander Kiossev, "Kak da mislim Balkanite? NEXUS i diskusiite za prostranstvoto," in *Podvizhnite Balkani—izsledvaniya na proekta NEXUS (2000–2003)*, ed. Alexander Kiossev (Sofia: Prosveta, 2009), 22–26. The debate between Todorova and Sundhaussen is presented in more detail in Roumen Daskalov's contribution to this volume.

and culture of the peoples of the region. Still, that corresponded to the perception of the Balkans as a "historical region" (*Geschichtsregion* as defined by Sundhaussen) and not as an area marked by certain historical legacy, in this case the Ottoman one (in Todorova's terms). Despite the warnings against the essentialization of the region and the widely shared conclusion that it was Ottoman rule that shaped the Balkan space, there were an increasing number of attempts to write the history of the region from earliest times to the present day. In other words, in an effort to deconstruct the negative stereotypes about the Balkans, scholars insisted that this notion occurred relatively late in the history of the region and that in any case, the specific characteristics of the region vis-à-vis the rest of the continent would, in the long run, disappear. At the same time, a new generation of students was invited—by the same scholars—to study and to deepen their knowledge of "the Balkans."

No Border on the Bosporus

After the massive wave of works emphasizing that the Balkans were an integral and indisputable part of Europe, some arguments (though relatively few) took the opposite tack. They insisted that there was no border on the Bosporus and questioned the logic of studying the Balkans as a region neatly separated from the Near/Middle East (and "the Orient"). In this way the international workshop "Balkan Studies—Quo Vadis?" in Vienna in April 2009 raised, among others, the question of "how far researchers' self-limitation to a European geography in approaching things Balkan is sound or, to the contrary, precisely a limitation."[115] The Forum for European Studies at the Hebrew University (Jerusalem) is among the institutions wishing to overcome the division between Near East studies and Balkan studies,[116] as is also reflected in its 2013 volume *Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean: The Balkans and the Middle East Compared*.[117] This new approach is based on several interrelated arguments, which I will try to present briefly.[118]

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115 http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/balkans/, accessed October 6, 2013.

116 Karl Kaser, "Balkan Studies Today at the University of Graz (and Elsewhere)" (Vienna, 2009), 3, http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/balkans/KKaser1/. Cf. Karl Kaser, "Balkan Studies in Graz: Past, Present and Future (1989–2007)," *Balkanistic Forum* nos. 1–3 (2007): 26–44.

117 Eyal Ginio and Karl Kaser, eds., *Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean: The Balkans and the Middle East Compared* (Jerusalem: European Forum at the Hebrew University, 2013).

118 I presented my own view in the article "History against Geography: Should We Always Think of the Balkans as Part of Europe?" in *History and Judgement*, eds. Alice MacLachlan and Ingvild Torsen, Vienna: IWM Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences, vol. 21: http://

First, the history of the region clearly does not fit into the geographical framework of the Balkan peninsula or of Southeastern Europe. The common characteristics of the Balkans are considered a legacy of Ottoman, and largely also Byzantine, domination of the region. In fact, however, both empires encompassed territories on both sides of the Bosporus, which could not be regarded as a regional border during any part of these empires' existence. This is an opinion Karl Kaser defended in several works after 2006–2007: "The research questions we have to pose must not simply by definition end at the European coast of the Bosporus. European and Asian regions share a Greek-Roman-Byzantine-Ottoman history going back several thousand years. To consider the European Balkans without their Asian counterpart, Eurasia Minor, does not really make any sense. Yet we have so far been doing just that."[119] This argument is equally valid whether one studies the long-term history of the region or the historical legacies that were preserved to the present day. Finally, Karl Kaser published an entire book on the history of the Balkans and the Near East[120]—a framework that dramatically differs from his above-quoted books of 1990 and 2002, which encouraged study of the region from a larger, European perspective.[121]

Other historical studies also noted the irrelevance of the conventional borders of the Balkans, including the continental border on the Bosporus. For instance, Hristo Matanov, in his book about the Balkans in the Middle Ages, outlined the borders of the peninsula and immediately added that in the medieval era, these borders had little or no importance. The most significant issue

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www.iwm.at/publications/junior-visiting-fellows-conferences/alexander-vezenkov/, republished in *Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean*, 59–77, http://www.ef.huji.ac.il/publications/Ottoman%20Legacies/Alexander%20Vezenkov_History%20against%20Geography.pdf. References below are made to this last version.

119 Karl Kaser, "Balkan Studies Today at the University of Graz (and Elsewhere)," 3; See also Karl Kaser, "Disciplinary Boundaries in Question: Balkan Studies in a Globalizing World" (Vienna, 2009), 3, http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/balkans/KKaser2/: "for Todorova the Balkans are an Ottoman legacy. It is obvious, however, that the Near East is also an Ottoman legacy, perhaps an even more pronounced one. How can the Bosporus separate one historical region from the other although they shared more than half a millennium of Ottoman history, about one thousand years of Byzantine history, and about another thousand years of Roman, Hellenistic, and Greek history?" See also Karl Kaser, "The Balkans and the Near East: A Joint History," *Annuario: The Albanian Yearbook of Historical and Anthropological Studies* 1 (2011), 20.

120 Karl Kaser, *The Balkans and the Near East: Introduction to a Shared History* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011).

121 Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte*, 1st ed. (1990), 12.

was that Byzantium and its civilization "boldly transgressed the natural geographical border between Europe and Asia, between the Balkan peninsula and Asia Minor."[122]

The result was a new appeal to study the "Balkans" in a larger context, but contrary to previous suggestions, this could not be an "all-European history" (*gesamteuropäische Geschichte*), because in both the Byzantine and Ottoman eras, the empires extended beyond the continental border, and the region had a great deal in common with the "non-European" Near/Middle East. Karl Kaser coined the term "Eurasia Minor"[123] or "Little Eurasia"[124] as a term for the Balkans and the Near East jointly. A spatially more limited Balkan-Anatolian research framework might also be considered in certain cases.[125] In practical terms, that would mean treating all of present-day Turkey as part of the region. That might seem like a formality, but it would entail several important changes. First, this means disregarding the "continental border," which is otherwise so important not only for delineating the region but also for defining its claimed Europeanness. Second, the proportion of the "Turkish," "Islamic," and "Oriental" elements in the "Balkan mosaic" would then increase dramatically (in territory and population, Turkey is bigger than the entire Balkans), and it could no longer be marginalized in the research. Finally, in this way Ottoman rule could be seen as an integral and organizing element of "Balkan culture" instead of as a foreign influence, albeit an important one. At the same time, we must be aware of the risk of replacing one region, seen as a pre-existing unit (Balkans, Southeastern Europe), with another, even larger region (Balkans-and-Anatolia, Balkans-and-Near-East) without discussing its relevance for specific historical periods.

The second important set of arguments is related to the problematization of the Balkans and, respectively, of Southeastern Europe as geographical constructs. Works from the 1990s criticized the subdivision of Europe and the "invention" of Eastern Europe and the Balkans as regions that were not fully "European." One of the most important arguments was that this subdivision of the continent was relatively recent. At the same time, such studies accepted the existence of Europe as something given and unquestionable. This is in sharp contrast with studies on the history of the idea of Europe, which

122 Hristo Matanov, *Srednovekovnite Balkani. Istoricheski ochertsi* (Sofia: Paradigma, 2002), 5–8.

123 Kaser, "Balkan Studies Today at the University of Graz (and Elsewhere)," 4; Kaser, "The Balkans and the Near East—A Joint History," 18.

124 Kaser, "Disciplinary Boundaries in Question: Balkan Studies in a Globalizing World," 3–4.

125 In more detail: Vezenkov, "History against Geography," 60, 62, 65, 67–69, 73.

analyze and present in detail the gradual crystallization of this idea in time.[126] They demonstrate that the roots of the present-day concept of Europe rely on two different traditions. On the one hand, there was the idea popular among ancient Greeks that the world they knew was divided into two or three parts (Europe, Asia, and possibly Libya, i.e., Africa). This interpretation was much better visualized in early modern times: geography maps from the sixteenth century onward present Europe as separate from Asia.[127] On the other hand, the Middle Ages saw the crystallization of the idea that there was a supranational community of the peoples belonging to Western Christianity. These two concepts not only had different roots but, with few exceptions, were used separately until the seventeenth and eighteenth century.[128] Later, various scholars emphasized that the contemporary idea of Europe was a typical product of the Enlightenment, when political criteria (like non-despotic governments and the cohabitation of various states in a balance of power)[129] overshadowed the idea of belonging to (Western) Christianity. From the late seventeenth and especially from the eighteenth century, the name "Europe" started being used more frequently. Finally, the present-day concept of Europe as a continent owes much to the development of geography as an academic discipline during the nineteenth century, which introduced the notion of "continents" not only as large landmasses but also as anthropogeographic units with individual profiles.[130]

From this perspective, one must question the sequence of the "inventions" of Europe and the Balkans. It was not possible to think of "Eastern Europe," "European Turkey," or "Southeastern Europe" before the concept of Europe as a continent had become widespread. Actually, the Balkans could be seen as an imprint of Ottoman domination in Europe only if one considers this continent as a fact of physical geography. However, in terms of physical geography, Europe is, in the best case, only one of the peninsulas of the much bigger Eurasian landmass, which in turn is closely connected to Africa. Therefore, the Balkans could be more properly regarded as the result of imposing the modern idea of the European continent on the Ottoman Empire and identifying the respective

126 Ibid., 60–63.

127 Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte und Geschichtswissenschaft*, 1st ed. (1990), 95; Wolfgang Schmale, *Geschichte Europas* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2000), 46ff.

128 Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *L'Idée d'Europe dans l'histoire* (Paris: Denoël, 1965), 74.

129 Federico Chabod, *Storia dell'idea d'Europa* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1961), 48 ff; Duroselle, *L'Idée d'Europe dans l'histoire*, 75ff.

130 Martin W. Lewis and Kären Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1997), 21–31.

part of it as "European Turkey." This notion is also encountered on some earlier maps (from the sixteenth century onwards) but gained popularity and political importance during the Enlightenment, along with the idea of Europe itself. Until that point in time, the line that separated "Europe" from "Asia" was a geographical and cartographical convention, just like the Greenwich meridian.

In other words, instead of regarding Europe as a pre-existing background, we could consider it a powerful political concept that substantially influenced the fate of the Ottoman provinces northwest of the Bosporus in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As a result, this part of the "Orient" started to be perceived as a European territory under (it was hoped, temporary) alien rule. It is true that most people in the eighteenth and even the nineteenth century continued to see the "Orient" as starting at the Ottoman frontier. However, their more educated contemporaries also started to attribute importance to the Bosporus as the border between "Europe" and "Asia."[131] The Great Powers' approach towards the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire differed from that towards the Asian and African provinces: in the previous case, new, formally independent states appeared, while in the latter, colonial regimes and mandates were established.

In any case, it must be noted that the concept of Europe played a central role in not only delineating the Balkans from the southeast but, more importantly, presenting the Balkans as something fundamentally different from those adjacent territories. In the past, the Ottomans and the Byzantines differentiated between the possessions on the two sides of the straits of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles (Rumili and Anadolu for the Ottomans; "West" or even "Europe" versus "East" or "Asia [Minor]" for the Byzantines[132]), but that was not yet the fundamental divide between regions into two "continents" established after the Enlightenment. In fact, Rumelia and Anatolia were more like twins in the Ottoman imperial administration.

Finally, the problem of the negative stereotypes about the Balkans could also be seen from a different angle. During the 1990s there was a strong emphasis on Western perceptions of the Balkans, and the question of the Balkans was seen as an internal problem of Europe ("the Other within"). Some authors warned against forgetting the powerful negative stereotypes that Balkan peoples have for one another, as well as the radical anti-Western attitudes within

131 Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Beck, 1998), 47–51.

132 Vasil Gjuzelev, "Predstavata za Evropa prez Srednovekovieto," *Izvestiya na Arheologicheskiya institut* 40 (2012): 274.

the region.[133] In addition, it should be noted that the claim that the Balkans were as "European" as any other part of the continent was implicitly related to the preservation of all kinds of stereotypes about "Asia" and "the Orient," as well as about the Turks and Muslims living there. It is no coincidence that works proclaiming the intrinsic Europeanness of the Balkans gained such popularity in the region and that traditionalist and nationalist intellectuals in the region found them a convenient form in which to present their anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim prejudices as "European values."[134] This double standard is visible even in academic works. Pavlos Tzermias, for instance, starts and ends one of his articles with firm and categorical statements against nationalism—yet in the same text, he praises the unity of Western and Eastern Christianity in the struggle against the Ottomans.[135]

This new trend to problematize "the border on the Bosporus" could be explained in at least two different ways—one related to the actual political situation and another one to the intrinsic developments in the field of Balkan studies. In the first case, Karl Kaser put forward the issue of decreasing political interest in a region that gradually becomes less problematic as it integrates into the European Union; that process results in diminishing funding for researching the Balkans. According to Kaser, the study of the region largely corresponded to the realities of the Cold War, and at present the "exclusive Balkan Studies outside of the Balkans have a predictable expiration date." He cited the fate of the Institute for Eastern and Southeastern Europe in Vienna, which was created during the Cold War, in 1958, and closed down in 2006.[136] In other cases, Balkan studies were integrated into larger academic units: on January 1, 2012, the Institute for Southeast [European] Studies in Regensburg was merged with the Institute for East European Studies into an Institute for East and Southeast European Studies.[137]

In fact, studies on the Balkans from outside the region usually include it in a larger spatial framework. It is hard to say to what extent this is due to a different perception of the region, because from a distance one tends to choose larger units of analysis, or to mere pragmatism in the institutionalization of academic research. For instance, in Paris is the inter-institutional Centre d'Études

133 Holm Sundhaussen, "Der Balkan: Ein Plädoyer für Differenz," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 29, no. 4 (2003): 610–612.

134 In more detail: Vezenkov, "History against Geography," 69–73.

135 Pavlos Tzermias, "Die historische Stellung des Balkans innerhalb Europas," 88, 90–91, 104.

136 Kaser, "Balkan Studies Today at the University of Graz (and Elsewhere)," 2. Cf. Kaser, *The Balkans and the Near East: Introduction to a Shared History*, 2–3.

137 http://www.ios-regensburg.de/institut/geschichte.html, accessed October 6, 2013.

Turques, Ottomanes, Balkaniques et Centrasiatiques (CETOBaC)[138]—in this case, Ottoman studies and Turkology seem to be at the center of interest there, and that explains the otherwise unusual cohabitation of studies on the Balkans with studies on Central Asia. Overall, the contemporary (post-World War II) Balkans are most often considered part of Eastern Europe, aside from the non-communist Balkan states, while studies of the more distant past, until the nineteenth century, are increasingly integrated in a larger framework with the Near/Middle East.

Obviously, the argument that interest is diminishing towards the Balkans as a troublesome area relates to the development of Balkan studies outside the region, but given the fact that scholars from the Balkans very often rely on financing from abroad, this trend would inevitably have an impact on the academic field as a whole. Still, in the Balkan countries there is also another reason for such a change, which is related to the development of Ottoman studies and other disciplines focused on the Near/Middle East. Concerning historical research, studies on the Ottoman period are of crucial importance for the conceptualization of the Balkans as a region. Indeed, in Bulgaria, "Balkan studies" was used for a long time as a euphemism for "Ottoman studies." Ottoman studies in the Balkan countries, regardless of what it is called and in what institutional framework it develops, has made substantial progress over the last several decades—works in this field are gradually shedding most of the national and religious prejudices that characterize national history-writing. Namely, this progress in Ottoman studies inevitably led to the revision of some basic assumptions in Balkan studies, including the tradition of studying the Balkans as something fundamentally different from the other Ottoman provinces.[139]

Alternative Regional Divisions and Chronological Limits

The suggestions that the Balkans be studied as an integral part of a much larger region (e.g., Europe, the Balkan-Anatolian region, or the Balkans-plus-the-Near/Middle East) are not the most provocative ones. It is possible to conceive of a fundamentally different division of this territory that considers the various parts of the Balkans in the framework of different other regions.

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138 Cf. http://cetobac.ehess.fr/ and http://cetobac.ehess.fr/index.php?1122, accessed October 6, 2013.

139 Recently Dimitris Stamatopoulos argued in favor of the convergence of Balkan and Ottoman studies. See his introduction to *Balkan Nationalism(s) and the Ottoman Empire*, vol. 1, *National Movements and Representations*, ed. Dimitris Stamatopoulos (Istanbul: ISIS, 2015), 9ff.

First of all, one may question the tradition that divides the continents, in this case Europe, into (historical) regions[140] and simultaneously regards the vast expanses of water, invariably and without debate, as natural borders. The most significant alternative approach is represented by the example of the Mediterranean, and more precisely, the "Mediterranean world" of Fernand Braudel, which is cited only occasionally with regard to the borders of the Balkans.[141] This concept questions the assumptions of the formula "surrounded by water on three sides," because it treats the seas as actually linking the lands that surround them. These two approaches to conceptualizing the region seem theoretically irreconcilable. However, in practical terms the concept of the Mediterranean world does not delegitimize the concept of the Balkans; as we have seen in some cases, it simply omits part of it—usually Greece or at least Southern Greece and the Greek Islands.

The Mediterranean should not necessarily be considered only one single spatial unit. We could also take into account the significance of the Aegean Sea, which plays a central role in Greek history (connecting continental Greece, the Greek Islands, and the Greek communities in Anatolia), and more generally puts it in closer connection to Mediterranean history than (only) to the Balkans. The Adriatic is an "Italian sea," that is, an area of domination of the Republic of Venice and aspirations of Italy after its unification, but also of belated interventions by the Habsburg Empire. This is clearly visible in the foreign interventions in the Albanian question from the late nineteenth century until World War II. Closely related to the impact of the Adriatic are the special cases of the Dalmatian coast and, further south, the Ionian Islands. Geographically, these territories are considered part of the Balkan peninsula, but they had a completely different political and cultural history, remaining beyond the grasp of the Ottomans.

Recently, various scholars have also addressed the question of the Black Sea region with regard to Balkan studies.[142] Still, the Black Sea could hardly be regarded as a space unifying all peoples living around it (Georgia and Armenia have few direct links with Romania and Bulgaria), and it is more properly

140 Hans-Dietrich Schultz, "Raumkonstrukte der klassischen deutschprachigen Geographie des 19./20. Jahrhunderts im Kontext ihrer Zeit. Ein Überblick," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 3 (2002): 355–357.

141 E.g., Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, 5.

142 Eyüp Y. Özveren, "A Framework for the Study of the Black Sea World, 1789–1915," *Review* (Fernand Braudel Center) 20, no. 1 (1997): 77–113; Stefan Troebst, "Schwarzmeerwelt: Eine geschichtsregionale Konzeption," *Südosteuropa-Mitteilungen* 46, nos. 5–6 (2006): 92–102.

regarded as an area of Russian-Ottoman rivalry (and only partly of Soviet-Turkish rivalry later) affecting both the Caucasus and the Eastern Balkans.

Unlike the "Mediterranean world" of Braudel, the concepts of the Adriatic and the Black Sea regions have a more limited impact on history-writing, or at least have not yet been the object of such influential works. More importantly, the idea that these two seas could be regarded as nuclei of respective regions is indirectly related to the division of the Balkan area: to the extent that one can speak of Adriatic and Black Sea spaces, they are entangled with the division of the region into the Western and Eastern Balkans. The Aegean space remains outside the "Eastern Balkans/Western Balkans" dichotomy and is more closely related to the Mediterranean.

These divisions of the region are entangled with different priorities in works on Balkan studies. Books with almost identical titles often have different scopes: some of them concentrate on the Russo-Ottoman rivalry and the Eastern Balkans, while others give priority to the Western Balkans and the Austro-Hungarian, and later also Italian, interests and interventions. Some regard the "Byzantine" and "Ottoman" legacies as basic elements of the "Balkan mosaic." Still others set aside Turkey and Greece as belonging to other regions, respectively Asia/the Middle East and the Mediterranean.

The question about the possibility of alternative regional divisions is directly related to the idea that historical regions are relevant for specific eras, that they have limits not only in terms of space but also in terms of time.[143] Balkan studies rarely seems to address this question, but recently Maria Todorova has suggested that the Balkans could be better understood from the perspective of historical legacies, and more specifically the Ottoman one, which implies research on a relatively clearly defined time span. Otherwise the idea of the "Balkan peninsula" implies an eternally existing spatial unit. Despite the still widely accepted approach of regarding the Balkans as a fact of physical geography—that is, as an unchanging unit for the purposes of historical studies—in practical terms, works on Balkan history during the late Ottoman and the post-Ottoman era have a special role. In fact, many of the major works on "the history of the Balkans" range from the fourteenth or fifteenth to the nineteenth or twentieth century[144] or even only from the eighteenth or nineteenth

143 Stefan Troebst, "Introduction: What's in a Historical Region? A Teutonic Perspective," *European Review of History* 10 (2003): 177. Troebst refers to Klaus Zernack.

144 Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453*; Dimitrov and Manchev, *Istoriya na balkanskite narodi*; Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*; Castellan, *Histoire des Balkans*; Mazower, *The Balkans*, etc.

to the twentieth century.[145] It is true that various authors in the nineteenth century were interested in the history of the region during ancient times, and most of the leading figures in Balkan studies during the interwar period were medievalists.[146] Also in later decades, studies of ancient times (Thracians, Dacians, Illyrians) and the Middle Ages were well represented at international conferences and collective works on the Balkans.[147] Several attempts have also been made to write the history of the region from a longer-term perspective that includes the ancient era.[148] Still, the academic conceptualization of the "Balkan history" starts with the Ottoman and post-Ottoman period and only then goes back to the pre-Ottoman eras. A vivid example is, again, the work of Nicolae Iorga. Primarily a medievalist, he published the book *Byzantine Forms and Balkan Realities* in 1922,[149] almost one decade after the Romanian edition of his book on the history of the Balkan states in modern times (1913).[150]

As demonstrated above, "the Balkans" correspond to an area that emerged as a region from the eighteenth to the early nineteenth century ("European Turkey") and whose present scope was set after World War I ("the Balkan states"). Correspondingly, this spatial framework is not completely adequate for studies of earlier eras. First, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there was a larger area under Ottoman domination, while in the Middle Ages there was a less extensive area under direct Byzantine control. This difference obviously leads to certain inconsistencies in historical studies. Moreover, there are obstacles that remained insurmountable despite the long tradition of writing the history of the region "from the earliest times." Georg Stadtmüller (1950) started his book with Roman rule over the region, and Edgar Hösch (1988) started with the Thracians, the ancient Macedonians, and the Roman conquest, but both omitted ancient Greece. The volume recently published by Konrad Clewing and Oliver Jens Schmitt started with the early Middle Ages, although in the introduction the editors expressed their hope that in the

145 Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*; Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans*; Gallagher, *Outcast Europe*; Glenny, *The Balkans*, etc.

146 Diana Mishkova, "What Is in Balkan History? Spaces and Scales in the Tradition of Southeast-European Studies," *Southeastern Europe* 34 (2010): 71.

147 About the congresses of Balkan/Southeast European studies, see Diana Mishkova's contribution to the present volume.

148 Stadtmüller, *Geschichte Südosteuropas*; Hösch, *Geschichte der Balkanländer*; Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds*.

149 Nicolae Iorga, *Formes byzantines et réalités balcaniques* (Bucharest and Paris: H.Champion, 1922).

150 Nicolae Jorga, *Istoria Statelor balcanice în epoca modernă* (Vălenii-de-Munte: Neamul Românesc, 1913).

future, the study of Southeast European history would also include the ancient era, as was the case until the beginning of the twentieth century.[151] Whether by circumstance or design, the fact that ancient Greece is omitted from the general overviews of the region's past clearly testifies that the writing of "Balkan history" starts with the study of more recent developments, and only afterward does it go back in time as far as possible.

Concerning more recent developments, the perception of the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire as a clearly defined region also changed over time, and the turning points again coincided with major redrawings of the political borders. The secession of new small states from European Turkey in the nineteenth century did not affect the perception of these territories as one region. Instead, it created the need for a new name for the gradually shrinking "European Turkey" and also provided one of the main characteristics of the region, later pejoratively termed "Balkanization." The invention of the concept of the "Balkan peninsula" in the nineteenth century initially had little impact, and in practice, scholars continued to write about European Turkey and its successor states. Until 1878 the borders of the Ottoman and post-Ottoman area and the "Balkan peninsula" as defined in geography studies diverged only slightly: if the Danube-Sava-Kupa line is taken as a basis (as was generally accepted at that time), the Habsburg Empire possessed less than 5 percent of the territory of the "peninsula."[152] After the Habsburg Empire occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, this province almost disappeared from works on the Balkans.[153] Interestingly, even the maps of the Balkans published on the eve of World War I differ from those we are now used to seeing: they do not cover the northwesternmost part of the "peninsula," and in some cases, parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina are omitted. Also in 1878, Romania obtained territories south of the Danube, but those who considered it one of the Balkan states based their arguments on history rather than on the possession of Dobrudja.[154] Actually, in works about the "peninsula" that appeared

151 *Geschichte Südosteuropas*, eds. Clewing and Schmitt, 4.

152 Lux, *Die Balkanhalbinsel*, 2. Of the total 468,571 sq. kilometers considered to constitute the Balkan peninsula, Austria-Hungary controlled 23,395 sq. kilometers: the Austrians held 12,832 sq. kilometers (in Dalmatia) and the Hungarians held 10,563 sq. kilometers.

153 Lionel W. Lyde and A.F. Mockler-Ferryman, *A Military Geography of the Balkan Peninsula* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1905), 25: "because they form now such an important outpost of the dual monarchy, especially with reference to the command of the Adriatic, that they can scarcely be treated apart from the monarchy"; Wirth, *Der Balkan*, 13.

154 Lyde and Ferryman, *A Military Geography of the Balkan Peninsula*, 70: "It seems desirable to give a short account of Roumania on political rather than geographical grounds.

before 1878,[155] Romania was considered a part of the Balkans, just as it was considered a part of "European Turkey" in the previous decades.

After the Balkan Wars and World War I, the process of political fragmentation in the region (the notorious "Balkanization") halted for a long time, until the breakup of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Actually, after 1918, new independent states appeared in Central Europe, and Finland and the Baltic states gained independence, while the rest of the Russian Empire, at least in theory, was federalized as a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. By contrast, with the enlargement of Romania and the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, a process of territorial consolidation took place in the Balkans and led to another very important change—the border between the post-Ottoman and the post-Habsburg space was forever wiped off the political map. As underlined in several places above, the redrawing of political borders in 1918 and the creation of Yugoslavia and Greater Romania had a profound effect on the academic discipline later called Balkan studies, which was obliged to include studies of the history of the Habsburg Empire and its legacy.

Concerning the former Ottoman territories, World War I had another important impact on the map. The initial peace treaty with the Ottoman Empire (Sevres, August 10, 1920) opened the door for the "Balkanization" of Anatolia: Greece received the territory around Izmir, while the Armenian state received a vast area that included Trabzon, Erzurum, Erzincan, and Van. The greatly reduced Ottoman state was further fragmented: its territory was reduced to central and northern Anatolia (the major cities there were Kayseri, Eskişehir, Ankara, Samsun, Sinop, and Zonguldak). The zone around the straits of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles, including Constantinople, was demilitarized. According to the treaty, Southern Anatolia was to be controlled by the great European states that won the war: in the southwest (including Aydın, Antalya, Konya, and Afyon) a vast Italian zone of influence was envisaged; east of it (including Mersin, Adana, Maraş, Malatya, and Sivas) a French zone of influence was designated; and in the southwesternmost part of present-day Turkey, near the border with Iraq, a considerably smaller British zone of influence was planned. Finally, the treaty also envisaged the possibility of creating a Kurdish

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Indeed geographically it has very little in common with the Balkan Peninsula *qua* peninsula, but it is very closely involved in typically 'Balkan' politics."

155 E.g., Franz Crousse, *La péninsule gréco-slave. Son passé, son présent et son avenir* (Brussels: Spineux & Cie, 1876). The paradox is that at first glance, the name "*péninsule gréco-slave*" implies excluding Romania. At the same time, this book does not discuss the Habsburg possessions (still limited at that time) that were formally part of the "peninsula."

state from the British zone and part of the French zone of influence (around Diyarbekir/Diyarbakır).

The national movement led by Mustafa Kemal Pasha consolidated one single national state on this territory. Actually, starting in the nineteenth century, the flow of refugees from the lost "European" provinces helped make Anatolia even more Muslim than before. The policies of ethnic cleansing—primarily the deportations and massacres of the Armenians and then the mass exodus of the Greek population during the Turkish War of Independence—erased most of the diversity of Ottoman Anatolia. Minorities within the Muslim population (the Kurds and the Alevis) were, for a long time, silenced in the new unitary republic.

In addition, the Turkish War of Independence (1919–1923) established not only the borders of the new republic but also the present-day perception of Anatolia as a region coinciding with the Asian part of the Republic of Turkey. Previously the terms "Asia Minor" and "Anatolia" were used to designate only the part of it protruding between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (northwest of the line between Trebizond and the Gulf of Alexandretta).[156] The extent of the Eyalet of Anatolia was even smaller. Thus in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the main difference between the Balkans and Anatolia crystallized: there were many national states in the former and one (relatively large) state in the latter. In both cases the current definition of the respective region is related to the imperial legacies, but the present-day political map is decisive.

The fact that the current political map of Anatolia is in one single color also affects the interpretation of the more distant past. Balkan studies and the individual historiographies in the area are interested not only in the formation of the various national states in the post-Ottoman period ("Balkanization") but also in the political fragmentation of the Balkans in the late Middle Ages, which substantially facilitated the Ottoman invasion. More importantly, every national historiography in the region has recognized certain medieval political formations (sometimes more than one) as predecessors of the respective national state. As a result, the medieval political map in history books is largely reinterpreted according to the present one. Actually, pre-Ottoman Anatolia was politically fragmented as well, but these small political formations (the

156 Stéphane Yerasimos, "L'obsession territoriale ou la douleur des membres fantômes," in *La Turquie*, ed. Semih Vaner (Paris: Fayard/Ceri, 2005), 39–60. Cf. Viquesnel, *Voyage dans la Turquie d'Europe*, vol. 1, 40; Ludovic de Contenson, *Les réformes en Turquie d'Asie*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Plon, 1913), 5 and the map, etc.

various beyliks during and especially after the Seljuqs) are the appanage of only one national historiography.

Thus the wars between 1912 and 1923 turned out to be decisive for the current perception of the Balkans in terms of spatial scope and borders, substantially redrawing the imperial legacies. Two decades later, World War II drew a completely different political map that has no direct connection to the former "European Turkey" as a discernable region. In fact, the war left only limited permanent changes in the political borders in the region. Much more important was the foreign powers' creation of spheres of influence during and after the war. During the war itself, the dividing line was shaped by German and Italian interventions in the Balkans. With few exceptions, one could discern an Adriatic and Mediterranean zone occupied by Italy, as well as a larger area in the inner and Eastern Balkans occupied by Germany or controlled by Romania and Bulgaria, whose regimes had much closer ties with Berlin.

The creation of spheres of influence at the end of the war produced a different configuration, which turned out to be much more durable. At first glance, the "percentages agreement" between Churchill and Stalin (October 1944) dealt with the Balkan region as a whole: the British prime minister started the conversation on this topic with the words "Let us settle our affairs in the Balkans." In fact, the two sides were interested in specific countries for specific reasons and not in the region as one whole entity. For the Soviet Union, Romania was important as an immediate neighbor on its western border, not as a "Balkan" country; for the same reasons (plus the Romanian oil reserves) it was also important for Nazi Germany, and as a consequence, it had to join the Axis before Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. In addition, the Soviet Union was interested in control over the straits of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles, which concerned neutral Turkey (not mentioned in the percentage agreement) and, indirectly, Bulgaria. But tensions with Turkey were not limited to "the Balkans"—the USSR had territorial claims in the Southern Caucasus, so more generally, one could speak of an eventual "Black Sea" frontline concerning both the Eastern Balkans and Southern Caucasus.

British foreign policy in the region was focused on Greece not as a "Balkan state" but as a Mediterranean one—it was a strategic stronghold in the Eastern Mediterranean, ensuring transport connections with the Middle East and especially with India (via the Suez Canal). From the British point of view, the other countries in the Balkans were only bargaining chips for the main goal: controlling Greece. After India gained independence, Greece was no longer a top British priority, and after 1947 the supervisory role over Athens was assumed by the United States, which saw Greece as an element of NATO's southern flank in Europe, i.e., as part of the East-West divide.

The Adriatic and the Western Balkans were of less interest to the winning powers, which explains why the British so easily left it to the communist partisans at the end of the war and why the USSR allowed them to leave its sphere of influence shortly after the war. Albania was not even mentioned in the percentage agreement and became the only occupied country in Europe that the armies of the anti-Nazi coalition did not enter: after German forces retreated, the local communist movement assumed power directly, while the only foreign power that intervened in Albanian affairs was the Yugoslav communists. Of course, Albania was a small country, but only five years earlier it was central to Mussolini's strategy to dominate the (Eastern) Mediterranean and primarily the Adriatic. For Britain, control over the Eastern Mediterranean was connected to the colonies in the Near East and especially to the route to India, leaving the Adriatic and the Western Balkans on the back stage.

Thus during World War II, and consequently in the postwar decades, a completely different geopolitical map of the Balkans emerged. This map indicated the role of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and the Adriatic, while the division between the Eastern and Western Balkans became clearly visible even in the framework of the communist bloc. As a whole the political geography of the region was redesigned in an unprecedented way: during the Cold War the countries in the south of the region (Greece and Turkey) were included in an alliance called the "North Atlantic Treaty Organization," while all others to the north became part of "Eastern Europe." At the same time the imperial legacies and the borders between them remained of limited importance, despite the fact that precisely these legacies were the reason to regard the Balkans as a separate region.

The fall of the Iron Curtain and the process of European unification with easily crossable borders made possible a rediscovery of the lingering effects of Ottoman domination on "European soil," which was no longer overshadowed by the divide between the communist and non-communist world. Actually, this process started somewhat earlier, with the erosion of communist rule in Eastern Europe, when various intellectuals from "Central Europe" argued that their countries had a substantially different past not only from the Soviet Union but also from the Balkan countries. Still, other legacies and borders are also clearly visible—the Balkans remain only one possible research framework among several. Thus, for instance, alongside the post-Ottoman and post-Habsburg space, the post-Yugoslav space appears as an interesting problem of its own—it includes parts of the two former empires, but they are entangled in a research field that is important in its own right.

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The results of all these debates about the spatial scope and the borders of the Balkans are contradictory: all the border delineations have been thoroughly critiqued, yet this has not have much impact on the way the history of the region is written. Allow me to mention just the most problematic points:

– The discussions seemingly urge us to "open" the scope of Balkan studies in all possible directions: towards Central and Eastern Europe and general European history, towards the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region, and towards the Middle East. This might be interpreted as an overcoming of artificially imposed limitations but also simply as a loosening of the research focus. Still, in recent works, the borders of the Balkans remain practically unchanged, and in many cases they are not even discussed.

– Many scholars warned, with good reason, that the Balkans should not always be treated as an indivisible whole. In fact, this consideration is of little practical importance—the vast majority of works in the field of Balkan studies deal with only one or two countries from the region. Another problem, one identified long ago, remains much more pressing: that Balkan history is most often written as a compilation of four, five, six, or more histories of the states and peoples of the region.

– At the same time, we are increasingly reminded that historical regions should not be regarded as eternally existing units and that the spatial framework should be chosen with regard to the specific problem and/or period under scrutiny. Nevertheless, leading scholars and research institutions continue with the attempts to write overviews of Balkan history from earliest times to the present day.

"The Balkans" remain a rigid and well-established framework, and from what has been said above, we can sum up the main turning points that shaped it. The first step was the crystallization of a clearly delineated region—European Turkey. It resulted from two processes that developed almost in parallel but independently of each other. On the one hand, this was the stabilization of the Ottoman border in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which drew a relatively clear line between its possessions and the Habsburg lands. The border on the Danube-Sava line not only lasted for a relatively long period but also was much more clearly traced than previous arrangements. On the other hand, the concept of European Turkey became possible thanks to the exploding popularity of the idea of Europe during the Enlightenment, which gave new force to the much older views about the division of the world's territory into different parts. In this case, that meant seeing the Ottoman provinces as "European," "Asian," and "African." The second important step was the

fragmentation of the Ottoman space into separate small states. This made the name "European Turkey" inadequate and at the same time gave the region one of its most important characteristics: "Balkanization." Thus the notorious "diversity" of the region was visualized on the political map as well, which had a great impact on the way this space was perceived and studied. The third decisive step was the creation of Yugoslavia and the enlargement of Romania in 1918, which transcended the frontier between the post-Ottoman and the post-Habsburg space. Thus the studies of the region were obliged to take into account one more imperial heritage alongside the Ottoman one. The political borders established after World War I also redrew the borders of the Balkans in historical studies. Despite all these critiques, this is the spatial framework followed in Balkan studies. It is worth noting that Balkan studies is interested primarily in the period when this spatial framework crystallized—works in this field more often deal with the nineteenth and the early twentieth century.[157]

The analysis will go further with two case studies that propose alternative approaches toward the definition of the spatial scope and the borders of the Balkans. I will thus try to demonstrate that the established academic tradition of tailoring the historical research to the established spatial delineations of the Balkans influences its conclusions. I will also try to show that the study of a specific problem could suggest different spatial delineations of the region and even a different perception of the Balkan space.

2 (Re)defining the Region by Localizing the "Balkan City"

The concept of the Balkans as a separate region is directly related to the designation of a whole range of realia, phenomena, and notions as "Balkan," such as "Balkan nationalism," "Balkan languages," "Balkan cuisine," and "Balkan habits." In any such case, one may argue whether and to what extent the respective phenomenon is representative of the Balkans and whether it is typical only of the Balkans. As a case study, I will analyze the appearance and the usage of the concept of the "Balkan city." Of course, this is one among many possible cases, but it is particularly useful for one reason. Unlike "Balkan music" or "Balkan cinema," not to mention "Balkan backwardness" or "Balkan mentality," the problem of cities and urban networks makes it possible to see the spatial dimension of the problem: the objects of study appear distinctly on the

157 It should not be surprising that this was also the case with the first two volumes of the present project, *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*. The chronological scope of our work resulted from our concentration on the most essential problematic for Balkan studies.

geographical map. Thus one could more easily verify whether something called "Balkan" is actually typical for "the Balkans" (or for the "Balkan peninsula"), whether it covers the whole of the region or instead also includes territories outside its conventionally accepted borders. In this way, through the prism of urban history, I will try to examine from a different angle the problem of the spatial scope of the Balkans. Instead of drawing the boundaries of the region (or the "peninsula") and searching for its specificities, I will start from one such specificity and try to map its territorial distribution.

My goal here is not to propose new research on the cities in the Balkans but to examine how Balkan studies interprets the urban history of the region and how certain authors embraced the concept of the "Balkan city." Urban history deals with a relatively "neutral," "technical" problematic: it analyzes the urban network, the central place functions of its cities, the urban morphology of the individual settlements, the specific institutions of urban administration, and types of public and private constructions. It would be valuable to examine how this "neutral problematic" is interpreted in national historiographies, in Balkan studies as well as in Byzantine and Ottoman studies. Each one of these disciplines formulates its own questions, examines the urban problematic in a respective spatial framework, and ends with different conclusions.[158]

From "Cities in the Balkans" to the "Balkan City"

The concept of the "Balkan city" appeared relatively late in the development of Balkan studies and was the result of a long process. First of all, an evolution took place in the researchers' approach in formulating their research topics. Earlier studies (especially those written in the first half of the twentieth century) usually discuss the various city types in the Balkans that appeared in different eras: they speak of "Byzantine," "German," "Slavic," "Dalmatian," or "Turkish"/"Oriental" (the terms differ from author to author) cities in the Balkans or in a certain Balkan country.[159] The listing of the different types of urban settlements is related to attempts to specify the area of diffusion of the respective type, but it is also entangled with the issue of the existing cities'

158 This part of the present study relies on the arguments developed in a previous article: "Zashto i kak be izmislen 'balkanskiyat grad'?" *Literaturen vestnik* 13, no. 38 (2006): 10–11; published in a revised version in *Gradăt: zalog na lokalni i globalni politiki*, eds. Maya Grekova and Elitza Stanoeva = *Kritika i humanizăm* 42, nos. 1–2 (2013): 15–37.

159 Cvijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique*, 198–206 = *Balkansko poluostrvo*, 215–233; Anastas Ishirkov, "Harakterni cherti na gradovete v Tsarstvo Bălgaria," *Godishnik na Sofiyskiya universitet—Istoriko-filologicheski fakultet* 21 (1925), 3ff, 12; Klaus-Detlev Grothusen, "Städtewesen und nationale Emanzipation in Südosteuropa," in *Ethnogenese und Staatsbildung in Südosteuropa* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), 77; etc.

transformations due to foreign dominations and influences, as well as to the settlement of new urban dwellers. In practice such studies either briefly present the various urban types or pursue a detailed analysis of only one of them; many works present one specific city of the respective type.

Here a problem emerges: instead of studying a specific type of city, works on Balkan history present the different types of cities in the examined territory. In fact, the study of every one of these urban types must go far beyond the spatial scope of the Balkans. This descriptive approach first appeared in geography books and was later used in works on general history. Balkanists deal with the cities "on the peninsula" and omit all others: in some cases Smyrna/Izmir and even Constantinople/Istanbul are considered "external" centers for the Balkan cultures during the Ottoman period.[160] Still, the decision to study the cities only "in the Balkans" goes against the logic not only of urban studies or the history of the Ottoman Empire but even of some national historiographies. The problem is clearly visible in works on the general history of the Balkans that focus on cities and urban life. Thus, for instance, Georges Castellan, in his *History of the Balkans*, presents only cities in the Balkans and includes Salonica/Thessaloniki but not Smyrna/Izmir,[161] although Smyrna otherwise appears in his study on several occasions, obviously because the city had an important place in Greek history.

Finally, a number of studies on urban history also limit their scope to the cities in the Balkans. In this way "cities in the Balkans" became a legitimate research topic in its own right—one of the leading Western scholars specializing in the region states that the history of the cities in Southeastern Europe undoubtedly constituted an important part of European urban history.[162] In the long run this (self-)limitation of the research within the borders of the Balkans was a precondition for inventing a specific type of city in the region. Some scholars started out by studying a territory that was "very diverse" and ended up asserting the discovery of all kinds of "specifically Balkan" phenomena. The Balkan city is only one of many.

What is surprising at first glance is that the object of this new interpretation turned out to be the Ottoman (Turkish, Oriental, etc.) cities in the Balkans, and these cities started to be labeled "Balkan," although it was just this urban type that was regarded as imported from outside at a relatively late stage in the

160 Josef Matl, "Die kulturelle Strahlungsfunktion der Stadt in Südosteuropa," in *Die Stadt in Südosteuropa. Struktur und Geschichte*, ed. Walter Althammer (Munich: Südosteuropa Gesellschaft, 1968), 100 and 104.

161 Castellan, *Histoire des Balkans*, 132–139.

162 Grothusen, "Städtewesen und nationale Emanzipation," 91.

history of the region. Just as the name "Balkan peninsula" replaced "European Turkey" after the 1870s, in recent decades certain studies refer to "Balkan cities" instead of "Oriental/Turkish/Islamic cities in the Balkans."

In fact, one early example in this direction is provided by Cvijić's work on the Balkan peninsula. In the chapter about the various types of settlements, he presents the "Turkish-Byzantine or Balkan city type proper."[163] This category encompasses the cities in the region, otherwise labeled "Turkish" or "Oriental," from the times before their modernization began. Still, it must be noted that Cvijić also proposes another category, which seems more prestigious in his scheme of the region's human geography: "cities from the zone of the patriarchal regime." These cities are considered a new phenomenon, largely shaped by recently migrated and citified (Serbian and other Slavic) peasants. This category includes towns in Serbia north of Niš, in Montenegro, and in parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as some cities in Bulgaria that Bulgarian historiography usually designates as cradles of the national revival (*văzrozhdenski gradove*), such as Koprivshtitsa, Panagyurishte, Kalofer, and Kotel, as well as Danube ports like Rustchuk/Ruse and Svishtov.[164] Here some other sporadic observations should also be mentioned, like those made by Milan Budimir and Petar Skok about Oriental urbanism as an unifying factor in the development of the Balkan peoples and as something characteristic of the region.[165]

Despite these and similar observations, the concept of the "Balkan city" gained ground in specialized studies starting from the 1960s. Several academic conferences on the topic took place, the most relevant of which were those in Moscow in March 1969[166] and in Venice in May 1971.[167] An important role in developing and popularizing the concept of the "Balkan city" was played by Nikolai Todorov, the founder and longtime (1964–1989) director of the Institute of Balkan Studies in Sofia. Todorov defended his views in several articles

163 Cvijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique*, 201.

164 Ibid., 203ff.

165 Diana Mishkova, "What Is in Balkan History? Spaces and Scales in the Tradition of Southeast-European Studies," *Southeastern Europe* 34 (2010): 73. Reference is made to Milan Budimir and Petar Skok, "But et signification des études balkaniques," *Revue internationale des études balkaniques* 1 (1934): 5–6.

166 Vera Katsarkova and Maria Kalitsin, "Mezhdunarodna konferentsiya vărhu balkanskiya grad prez XV–XVIII vek," *Istoricheski pregled* 25, no. 4 (1969): 161–167. Papers from the conference in Moscow are published in *La ville balkanique, XV^e–XIX^e ss.* (Sofia: Éditions de l'Académie Bulgare des Sciences, 1970).

167 Vasilka Tăpkova-Zaimova and Veselin Traykov, "Mezhdunaroden kolokvium văv Venetsia," *Istoricheski pregled* 27, no. 5 (1971): 158–160.

written in the 1960s[168] and finally in his book *The Balkan City 1400–1900*, which appeared in Bulgarian in 1972[169] and was translated into Russian (1976), French (1980), English (1983), and Greek (1986). For this book Todorov was awarded the highest prize for such achievements in communist Bulgaria—the Dimitrov Prize.[170] Todorov writes about "a different group of Balkan cities—different typologically both from the West European and from the Muslim city."[171] He states, "The Balkan city possesses its own unique architectural and planning features," but these unique features are only very briefly described: the author mentions the "destruction or absence of fortress walls," the "absence of multi-storied buildings," and the fact that, despite all this, the cities were "well, even densely, populated."[172]

Todorov's study does not include all cities in the Balkans, only those that were previously called "Turkish" or "Oriental" cities. Todorov sees as "Balkan cities" only cities under the Ottomans and only as long as they were under the Ottomans. Cities in Greece and Serbia after the creation of the national states are introduced only for the sake of comparative prospective, which had to show even more clearly the distinctive features of Balkan cities.[173] Todorov set aside towns in Wallachia and Moldavia, despite certain similarities of their urban structure with Oriental towns. The choice of the examined cities provoked the comment that in fact, the "Balkan city" from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century was designed simply to replace the "Ottoman city in the Balkans."[174] The popularization of the concept of the "Balkan city" was paralleled by sharp critiques of earlier studies of "Turkish," "Oriental," or "Ottoman" cities. The main targets of these critiques were works of the Turkish historian Ömer Lütfi Barkan and, concerning Bulgarian authors, often the works of the architect Todor Zlatev.[175]

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168 Nikolai Todorov, "Po nyakoi văprosi na balkanskiya grad prez XV–XVII v.," *Istoricheski pregled* 18, no. 1 (1962): 32–58; Nikolai Todorov, "Balkanskiy gorod XV–XIX vv. v sostave Osmanskoy imperii," *Etudes Balkaniques* 8, no. 4 (1971): 28–54.

169 Nikolai Todorov, *Balkanskiyat grad, XV–XIX vek. Sotsialno-ikonomichesko i demografsko razvitie* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1972).

170 Central State Archive, 1-b/66/213, f. 2: Protocol No. 213 of the Politburo, June 15, 1976.

171 Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City 1400–1900* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1983), 8.

172 Ibid., 33–34.

173 Ibid., xx.

174 Machiel Kiel, "Urban Development in Bulgaria in the Turkish Period," in *The Turks of Bulgaria: The History, Culture and Political Fate of a Minority*, ed. Kemal Karpat (Istanbul: ISIS, 1990), 79–80.

175 Strashimir Dimitrov, "Za priemstvenostta v razvitieto na balkanskite gradove prez XV–XVI vek," *Balkanistika 2* (Sofia: Institut po balkanistika, 1987): 5–6; Georgi Kozhuharov,

Earlier generations of scholars did not write about a typological difference between cities in the Balkan provinces and those in the other parts of the Ottoman Empire, nor they were using a different term for the Ottoman cities in the Balkans. The same is true of Western travelers. In the past, even the leading figures of the national movements in the region did not see a difference between the cities in their own country and those in the non-European parts of the Ottoman Empire. In the Bulgarian case, Lyuben Karavelov's comments are a good example: he remarked that Sofia was like "all Turkish cities not only in Europe and in Asia but also in Africa," and he put Plovdiv on an equal footing with "all other Asian cities."[176] Similarly, in a travel account written well after independence was achieved, Ivan Vasov describes the small town of Peshtera (inhabited mostly by Bulgarians) as "a Turkish town like all other Turkish towns."[177] Monographs about individual towns and cities, written in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, also speak of "Turkish cities," the "Turkish appearance of the cities," and so on. That also explains why, as mentioned above, most of those who defended the term "Balkan city" felt obliged to explain and refute the "delusions" of numerous local and foreign authors from the past.

Not only is the "Balkan city" a later "academic" invention, but it is also not always accepted. Western scholars use the expression "Balkan cities/towns" in order to outline the geographic location of the urban settlements. Yet at the same time they speak of "typical Islamic towns in the Yugoslav Balkan lands" that had a "Oriental appearance" and "Turkish houses."[178] Edgar Hösch points to "the typical Turkish country town" as a characteristic element of the "area of Balkan-Byzantine culture with a strong Oriental element."[179] Such designations as "Turkish" and "Oriental" continued to predominate in some Balkan historiographies as well, especially in the former Yugoslavia and the successor

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"Arhitectura i stroitelstvo prez Văzrazhdaneto," in *Sofia prez vekovete*, vol. 1, eds. Georgi Georgiev and Boris Mateev (Sofia: BAN, 1989), 115–117; Margarita Harbova, *Gradoustroystvo i arhitektura po bălgarskite zemi prez XV–XVIII vek* (Sofia: BAN, 1991), 9. For a recent overview, see Grigor Boykov, "The Borders of the Cities: Revisiting Early Ottoman Urban Morphology in Southeastern Europe," in *Bordering Early Modern Europe*, eds. Maria Baramova, Grigor Boykov and Ivan Parvev (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015), 243–247.

176 Lyuben Karavelov, *Zapiski za Bălgariya i za bălgarete* (Sofia: MNP, 1930), 52 and 87.

177 Ivan Vazov, *V nedrata na Rodopite*, chapter 31, "Iz proloma na Stara reka. Peshtera," quoted in http://www.slovo.bg/showwork.php3?AuID=14&WorkID=848&Level=2 (1st ed., 1892).

178 Francis Carter, "Urban Development in the Western Balkans, 1200–1800," in *An Historical Geography of the Balkans*, 179–182.

179 Hösch, *The Balkans*, 21 = Hösch, *Geschichte der Balkanländer*, 21.

states.[180] Nedeljko Radosavljević, for instance, emphasizes that towns in eighteenth-century Serbia looked completely Oriental, including the Christian neighborhoods.[181] He also mentions that towns that were under Austrian rule for some time later fully regained their Oriental features: by the end of the eighteenth century, Belgrade showed no traces of the Austrian domination from 1718 to 1739, and "the appearance of Belgrade was typically Oriental." The same was true of the small town of Valjevo, which "again became an Oriental town."[182] Moreover, Božidar Jezernik uses the term "Balkan towns" as a way to name "the Turkish towns in the Balkans."[183]

Furthermore, in many cases the label "Balkan" is used for regional clarification alongside, and even synonymously with, the label "Oriental." Studies on the cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina sometimes call the city "Oriental-Balkan," alongside the term "Oriental-Islamic city."[184] In other cases, the term "Bosnian-Oriental city" is used with practically the same meaning.[185] The studies speak of "Oriental-Muslim"-type cities, which preserved their Oriental physiognomy even after their transformation based on the Western European model (after 1878).[186]

To the best of my knowledge, in Greek, Albanian, and Macedonian historiographies the continuity or, respectively, the decline and even collapse of

180 Divna Đurić-Zamolo, *Beograd kao orijentalna varoš pod Turcima, 1521–1867* (Belgrade: Muzej grada Beograda, 1977); Veljko Rogić, "The Changing Urban Pattern in Yugoslavia," in *An Historical Geography of the Balkans*, 413–414; Radovan Samardžić, "O gradskoj civilizaciji na Balkanu XV–XIX veka," in *Gradska kultura na Balkanu, XV–XIX vek* (Belgrade: SANU, 1984), 1–18.

181 Nedeljko Radosavljević, "Putopisna literatura o početku evropeizacije grada u Srbiji (kraj 18.—prva polovina 19. veka)," in *Yugoistochnoevropeyskiyat grad i săvremennostta na minaloto. Nauchni izsledvaniya v chest na prof. Liliya Kirova*, ed. Antoaneta Balcheva (Sofia: Faber, 2012), 123.

182 Ibid., 124, 127.

183 Božidar Jezernik, "Western Perceptions of Turkish Towns in the Balkans," *Urban History* 25, no. 2 (1998): 211–230.

184 Iljas Hadžibegović, *Bosanskohercegovački gradovi na razmeđu 19. i 20. stoljeća* (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2004), 7, 11, 259, 293.

185 Rusmir Djedović and Benjamin Bajrektarević, "Tuzla od tradicionalnog orijentalnog do modernog evropskog industrijskog grada," in *Bosanskohercegovački gradovi u procesu političke modernizacije* (*1850–1950*). *Zbornik radova*, eds. Adnan Velagić and Asim Krhan (Sarajevo and Mostar: University Press / Muzej Hercegovine, 2013), 125, 127, 132, 133.

186 Jasmin Branković, *Mostar 1833–1918. Upravni i politički položaj grada* (Sarajevo: University Press, Magistrat, 2009), 150, 154; Jasmin Branković, "Urbani razvitak grada Mostara za vrijeme austrougarske uprave," in *Bosanskohercegovački gradovi u procesu političke modernizacije*, 118, 122.

urban life after the Ottoman invasion is discussed without following up with the concept of the "Balkan city." Studies usually emphasize the new Oriental and Islamic features of the cities under the Ottomans.[187] Comparisons with cities in the Balkans appear in some works on the history of Romanian cities. Emanuela Costantini, for instance, discovers certain similarities between the cities in the Danubian principalities and the Ottoman and post-Ottoman cities in the Balkans, but at the same time notes the differences between Bucharest and the other Balkan capitals. Other studies, such as a monograph by Simion Câlţia, analyze traditional Romanian towns in the context of European urban history without discussing the possible Ottoman and/or Balkan parallels.[188] More interesting in the Romanian case is the clear differentiation between the cities in Wallachia and Moldavia versus those in Transylvania, usually created and largely shaped by German settlers. While national historiography traditionally tries to see the common elements and the parallels in the history of the different parts of the country and to present them in one single grand narrative, studies of urban history much more clearly underscore the differences and usually limit their scope to the towns in Wallachia and Moldavia.[189]

Even in academic milieus in Bulgaria, where the expression "Balkan city" is well known and widely used, the term is invested with a range of meanings, some of them clearly diverging from the concept described above. Certain works do not discuss at all what the characteristics of the "Balkan city" are—studies on the cities in the Ottoman period are simply named this way. Often these works deal with only some of the cities in the region.[190] Often the expression "Balkan city" means just "a city in the Balkans" and in this sense might be used even for Ljubljana.[191] Still, more attentive scholars do not label "Balkan" all the cities located within the conventionally established borders

187 E.g., Kornelija Jurin Starčević, "Islamsko-osmanski gradovi dalmatinskog zaleđa: prilog istraživanju urbanog razvoja u 16. i 17. stoljeću," *Radovi—Zavod za hrvatsku povijest* 38, No. 1 (2006): 113–154; Siniša Mišić, *Leksikon gradova i trgova srednjovekovnih srpskih zemalja* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010), 13; Ferit Duka, "Ndryshime në fizionominë urbanistike dhe arkitekturore të qytetit shqiptar të periudhës osmane: dimensioni islamiko-oriental (shek. XVI–XVII)," *Studime historike* 66, nos. 1–2 (2012): 25–46.

188 Simion Câlţia, *Aşezări urbane sau rurale? Oraşele din Ţările Române de la sfârşitul secolului al 17–lea la începutul secolului al 19–lea* (Bucharest: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2011).

189 Ibid., 15.

190 E.g., Bistra Cvetkova, *Vie economique des villes et ports balkaniques au XV^e et XVI^e siècles* (Paris: Geurhner, 1971) = *Revue des Etudes Islamiques* 38, no. 2 (1970): 267–355.

191 Ivaylo Nachev, "Italian Influence in Shaping the Balkan City: Fabiani's Ljubljana in the Beginning of the 20th Century," *Etudes Balkaniques* 48, nos. 2–3 (2012): 112–119.

of the region. Thus, for instance, a few years ago Tamara Stoilova wrote about eighteenth-century Dubrovnik as a "European city in the Balkans."[192] In some cases the "Balkan city" is depicted as an outcome of the building traditions of the Bulgarians. A good illustration is the works of Nikolay Tuleshkov, who insists that there was a clear difference between Balkan and Anatolian ("*maloaziyska*") architecture, and as a single exception presents the works of Bulgarian master builders in Asia Minor during the second half of the nineteenth century.[193] By contrast, Elena Ivanova uses the Balkans as a research framework in order to problematize the concept of "Bulgarian Revival architecture." In addition, while discussing the "traditional Balkan city," Ivanova underlines that the term is purely conventional and that during the Ottoman period "in practice there was no . . . substantial difference from the traditional city in Asia Minor."[194]

The designation "Balkan city" also appears in some studies that are not devoted to urban history and urban studies per se. Bernard Lory's monograph about Bitola/Manastır in the late Ottoman period calls it "the Balkan city par excellence" but does not deal with the specific features of the cities in the region and examines the city of Bitola as a revealing example of Balkan society during the rise of nationalism.[195] This is hardly surprising: in general, Balkan studies is interested mainly in the process of building and manifestation of the national identities in the region, and all other problems are often addressed through this prism.

At the same time, Turkish national historiography and some Ottomanists speak of "Anatolian towns" and "Anatolian cities."[196] These too are Ottoman cities, but the respective works are interested only in cities in Anatolia—in practice, that means the territory of present-day Turkey, which has nothing to

192 Tamara Stoilova, "Dubrovnik prez XVIII vek—evropeyski grad na Balkanite," in *Yugoiztochnoevropeyskiyat grad i săvremennostta na minaloto*, 81–95.

193 Nikolay Tuleshkov, *Arhitekturnoto izkustvo na starite bălgari*, vol. 2, *Osmansko srednovekovie i văzrazhdane* (Sofia: AI "Prof. Marin Drinov" / Arh & Art, 2006), 8–10, 228–232.

194 Elena Ivanova, "Erkernata arhitektonika v traditsionniya balkanski grad: kăm drug prochit na 'văzrozhdenskiya stil,'" *Izkustvovedski cheteniya* (2010): 236–243.

195 Bernard Lory, *La ville balkanissime: Bitola, 1800–1918* (Istanbul: ISIS, 2011).

196 Sevgi Aktüre, *19. yüzyıl sonunda Anadolu kenti mekansal yapı çözümlemesi* (Ankara: ÖDTÜ, 1978); Suraiya Faroqhi, *Town and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting* (Cambridge, 1984); Suraiya Faroqhi, "The Anatolian Town and Its Place within the Administrative Structure of the Ottoman State (1500–1590)," in *Making a Living in the Ottoman Lands, 1480 to 1820* (Istanbul: ISIS, 1995), 19–47; Musa Çadırcı, *Tanzimat döneminde Anadolu kentlerinin sosyal ve ekonomik yapıları* (Ankara: TTK, 1991), etc.

do with the realities before 1918–1923. This "division of labor" among the historiographical schools facilitated the crystallization of a separate narrative about the cities in the Balkans and in some cases of the "Balkan city."

Even works that do not draw a contrast between "Balkan" and Ottoman cities respect this boundary. In *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule*, Peter Sugar presents the cities in the "core regions" of the empire (the description is very similar to the Oriental/Islamic cities) and then compares them to the cities in other areas, like those in Hungary and the Aegean Islands.[197] In Ottoman studies the term "core regions" usually designates Rumelia and Anatolia (the territories that were closer to the imperial center and were more strictly controlled), as opposed to the more superficially controlled provinces on the periphery (especially the Arab lands), as well as temporary possessions and autonomous principalities under Ottoman suzerainty. Southeast European studies is interested only in the cities in Southeastern Europe, regardless of their close similarities with the cities in the non-European part of the core regions. Even experts in Ottoman studies were able to limit the scope of their observations to the cities in the Balkan peninsula, whose pre-modern architecture and urban structure "looks unexpectedly homogenous in a vast region between Banja Luka and Edirne."[198]

The connection made in historical studies between urban development and national history has also had a great impact.[199] National historiographies usually speak of "Bulgarian," "Albanian," "Greek," "Serbian," "Macedonian," and other such towns and cities that, taking a larger perspective, could be called "Balkan towns/cities." From this perspective "Bulgarian," "Greek," and other such cities and houses are considered variants of the "Balkan cities" and "Balkan houses" that, more generally, are seen as part of the larger "European context."[200] As a consequence "Balkan cities" (during the Ottoman period) are now seen as different from "Ottoman cities"; at most, scholars consider the parallels between "Balkan" and Ottoman cities, due to the Oriental

197 Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804*, 63, 74ff.

198 Maximilan Hartmuth, "The Historic Fabric of Balkan Towns: Space, Power, Culture and Society," in *Four Historic Cities in the Western Balkans: Value and Challenges*, eds. Stephan Doempke, Anduela Lulo Caca, and Sadi Petrela (Tirana: Gjirokastra Conservation and Development Organization, 2012), 17–22.

199 Grothusen, "Städtewesen und nationale Emanzipation," 75: "die Vorgänge der nationalen Emanzipation in Südosteuropa im 18. and 19. Jahrhundert sind untrennbar mit der städtischen Entwicklung verbunden."

200 Margarita Harbova, "L'espace culturel de la ville balkanique entre l'Orient et l'Europe (D'après l'exemple de la ville de Plovdiv, XVIII^{e}–XIX^{e} siècles)," *Etudes Balkaniques* 39, no. 1 (2002): 129, 137.

influences on urban life in the Balkans. For instance, Raina Gavrilova, in her book about eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Bulgarian urban culture, first lists the existing studies on Bulgarian and other Balkan cities and adds that studies on the Ottoman cities were also very useful.[201] In this case "Balkan cities" is a common designation for Bulgarian, Greek, Serbian, and other such cities in the Balkans, not a subcategory of Ottoman cities.

The growing popularity of these interpretations had a decisive impact on the way the national historiographies in the Balkans evaluated the urban culture of the Ottoman period. In the past, when the cities in the Ottoman Balkans were regarded as "Turkish" and "Oriental," they were accordingly considered a foreign body, and national historiographies (that of Bulgaria and especially of Serbia) idealized the villages.[202] In this new situation, national historiographies could also claim the urban heritage and even pretend that "Balkan civilization was essentially urban,"[203] a cliché otherwise used for Islamic civilization. Thus once it became clear that the achievements of Ottoman urban culture could not be easily neglected, they started to be interpreted as a cultural heritage belonging to the respective nation or to all Balkan peoples.

Balkan vs. Islamic/Oriental/Ottoman/Turkish Cities

Here it might be useful to clarify some terminology. Experts sometimes debated whether to speak of "Turkish," "Oriental," "Islamic," or "Ottoman" cities, and their preferences were often influenced by politics. The concept of the "Islamic city" is the most elaborated among them and relies on several types of criteria. First of all, it points to the specific (from the Western European point of view) institutions that fulfill the central function of the city in the Islamic world. According to the classic definition of the French Orientalist William Marçais, the Islamic city is the seat of an Islamic judge (*kadi*) and contains a great mosque, a covered market (*suq*), and a public bath (*hamam*).[204] Following Max Weber, some scholars underline the cities' lack of legal urban status and, respectively, of autonomous municipal institutions and urban community. The most visible characteristics of the "Islamic city" concern the urban morphology: according to the classical definition, the Islamic city is characterized

201 Raĭna Gavrilova, *Bulgarian Urban Culture in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1999), 11.

202 *Balkan i balkanci*, vol. 1 (Belgrade: Balkanski institut, 1937), 43–45; Petăr Mutafchiev, "Gradăt i seloto v nashiya minal i săvremenen zhivot," *Prosveta* 5, No. 5 (1940): 519ff.

203 Gavrilova, *Bulgarian Urban Culture*, 45.

204 Eugen Wirth, "Zur Konzeption der islamischen Stadt. Privatheit im islamischen Orient versus Öffentlichkeit in Antike und Okzident," *Die Welt des Islams* 31 (1991): 51.

by its subdivision into a market area in the center and a residential area around it. The market nucleus contains the great (Friday) mosque and the covered market (*suq*); the latter is considered by some scholars to be the most important element of the Islamic city; the residence of the ruler or, respectively, the governor was not always centrally located in the city. The residential area is subdivided into neighborhoods (*mahalle*), which are homogeneous in terms of religion (and sometimes also in terms of ethnicity and even tribe); they might even be surrounded by walls. The street network features relatively narrow and serpentine streets; only the few main ones leading to the central market area are somewhat larger, while the streets in the residential area are often cul-de-sacs.[205] Studies on specific cities in the Islamic world note several exceptions to these characteristics: in fact, usually there are also some dwellings in the market area; many neighborhoods are of mixed religious affiliation; and so on. There are also important individual differences between the cities in the Islamic world, as well as regional variations. At the same time, it is often emphasized that most of these characteristics could be found in many other cities in various eras and regions, not only in the Islamic world. Finally, the concept of the Islamic city has been severely criticized for its Orientalist and essentialist overtones. At present, instead of referring to an ideal model of the "Islamic city," scholars instead discuss the impact of religion on the way of life and the appearance of the cities predominantly inhabited by Muslims.[206]

The definition of the same cities as "Oriental" is also related to the often-criticized Eurocentric perspective, but there is an important difference in the temporal limits. Eugen Wirth demonstrates that most characteristics of the "Islamic cities" are the same as those of the pre-Islamic ones. He suggests using a more general designation: the term "Oriental city."[207] In any case, the usage of both designations—"Islamic city" and "Oriental city"—allows one to highlight the common traits of the cities in a vast area, which are

205 E.g., Gustave E. von Grunebaum, "The Structure of the Muslim Town," in *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge / Kegan Paul, 1961), 141–158; André Raymond, *Grandes villes Arabes à l'époque ottomane* (Paris: Sindbad, 1985), 168 ff, etc. Cf. Heinz Heineberg, *Stadtgeographie*, 3rd ed. (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), 288–295.

206 Janet Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City: Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19 (1987): 155–176.

207 Eugen Wirth, "Villes islamiques, villes arabes, villes orientales? Une problématique face au changement," in *La ville Arabe dans l'Islam*, eds. D. Chevalier and A. Boudhiba (Tunis: Université de Tunis & CNRS-Paris, 1982): 198; Eugen Wirth, "Zur Konzeption der islamischen Stadt," 57.

otherwise labeled according to ethnic affiliation and political fragmentation as "Arabic"/"Turkish"/"Iranian"/etc. cities.

The designation "Ottoman city" is predominantly used in historical studies, but without being counterposed to the definitions "Islamic" and "Oriental."[208] Indeed, Ottoman cities are "Islamic" and "Oriental," and the very concepts of "Islamic city" and "Oriental city" were elaborated on the basis of studies on specific cities that were for centuries part of the Ottoman Empire. For example, André Raymond writes about the "Islamic city" in his book devoted to "great Arab cities in the Ottoman period," while Maurice Cerasi presented Ottoman cities and architecture in a book titled *The Levantine City*.[209] One of the first academic works about the Ottoman city deals with the "Islamic city" in Asia Minor ("*kleinasiatische Islamstadt*").[210] Usually historical studies on the "Ottoman city" go into much more detail about the specifics of the Ottoman domination and rely on archival documents left by this administration, especially the various types of tax registers and judicial (*kadi*) registers, but also *vakıf* deeds and other relevant sources. Such studies analyze the impact of Ottoman authorities and their policies on urban development; they often underline the benefits of living in a vast empire for the development of trade and as a consequence of cities, as well as the fact that under Pax Ottomana, the cities in the interior of the empire were not fortified, which allowed for a much lower density of construction.

The choice of which term to use has political connotations in Turkey as well. In the early years of the Kemalist republic, as a result of the critical attitude towards the sultanic past as well as the interest in the purely Turkic roots, studies speak of "Turkish cities" and also point to the ancient building traditions of the Turks.[211] Starting from the 1940s, in parallel with the positive re-evaluation of the Ottoman heritage, it was the term "Ottoman city" that gained a dominant position in Turkish historiography. In recent decades, as the role of religion in public and political life has increased, Turkish works

208 Gilles Veinstein, "The Ottoman Town (Fifteenth-Eighteenth Centuries)," in *The City in the Islamic World*, vol. 1, eds. Renata Holod, Attilio Petruccioli, and André Raymond (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 205–217.

209 Raymond, *Grandes villes Arabes à l'époque ottomane*; Maurice Cerasi, *La città del Levante. Civiltà urbana e architettura sotto gli Ottomani nei secoli XVIII–XIX* (Milan: Jaca Book, 1986).

210 Richard Busch-Zantner, "Zur Kentniss der osmanischen Stadt," *Geographische Zeitschrift* 38, no. 1 (1932): 1–13.

211 Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türkiyede Şehirciliğin Tarihî İnkişafı* (Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Gazete ve Matbaası, 1936); Osman Nuri Ergin, *Türk Şehirlerinde İmaret Sistemi* (Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Matbaası, 1939).

increasingly speak of the "Islamic city." Of course, the term is stripped of all pejorative and Orientalist overtones, and the "Islamic" traits of the Ottoman cities are presented in a positive light.[212] Moreover, in the case of Turkish historiography, the usage of the different terms is not mutually exclusive—Islamic religious buildings are the most important monuments in "Turkish cities."

More traditionalist national historiographies in the non-Muslim Balkan countries do not take into account the differences between the terms "Islamic," "Oriental," "Ottoman," or "Turkish" city and, in many cases, are not interested in these nuances. Such studies examine the impact of one foreign and allegedly alien power over their own cities. Studies that present the "Balkan city" try to differentiate this category from all those mentioned above, which are considered imprecise as well as unprestigious.

While the terms "Ottoman," "Islamic," "Oriental," and even "Turkish city" do have a similar meaning, surprisingly, the same applies to the term "Balkan city," which was coined to replace these other terms concerning this region. Though the concept of the "Balkan city" has been around for a long time, when scholars try to characterize it, they usually list the features of the Islamic city concept. Studies published in Bulgaria and Albania even attribute to the "Bulgarian/Albanian/Balkan city of the Revival period" the traits that are usually considered main characteristics of the Islamic cities. Some authors insist on the central role of the market nucleus, the *çarşı*;[213] other works repeat the description at length, pointing to the strict division between the market nucleus and the residential areas, the latter subdivided into ethnically segregated neighborhoods, organized around the local mosque or church.[214] Those Balkan intellectuals who spoke of the specifics of the Balkan city vis-à-vis the (Central) European city actually listed its well-known "Oriental" characteristics.[215] In some cases, the perception of the same characteristics changed. For example, narrow and serpentine streets, considered one of the main handicaps of Oriental/Turkish cities, are simply "picturesque" in the case

212 Halil İnalcık, "Istanbul: An Islamic City," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 1 (1990): 1–23; Yılmaz Can, *İslam şehirlerini fiziki yapısı* (*H. I–III / M. VII–IX yüzyıl*) (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakıfı, 1995).

213 Todor Zlatev, *Bălgarskata natzionalna arhitektura. V. 1. Bălgarskiyat grad prez epohata na Văzrazhdaneto* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1955), 141; Gavrilova, *Bulgarian Urban Culture*, 27: "I adopted as *differentia specifica* of the Balkan town economics the presence of a *çarsi*, i.e. the Arab *suq*, bazaar, marketplace."

214 Tzveta Todorova, "Ot stariya Rustchuk kăm noviya Russe," *Almanah za istoriyata na Russe*, vol. 2 (Russe: Dărzhaven arhiv—Russe, 1997): 370.

215 Pleşu, "Pourquoi doit-on sauver les Balkans?".

of Balkan cities. Balkan cities are not "sparsely populated"—their houses simply have "big yards" and are "surrounded by greenery."

Although Jovan Cvijić wrote on this subject before the concepts of the Islamic city crystallized, his description lists similar characteristics for what he called the "Turko-Byzantine or Balkan city." It has short, serpentine, and dirty streets, and covered markets ("*des marchés couverts, les* bezisten, *et de grands* bazars") play a central role in it; the yards of the houses are surrounded by walls.[216] In the Serbian edition of the book, Cvijić adds that in larger cities the market area itself was subdivided into sections according to the various crafts (*podeljena na delove raznih zanata*).[217]

Interestingly enough, historians use many Turkish, Arabic, and Persian loanwords in order to describe not only the "Balkan city" but even the Bulgarian or Albanian city during the "national revival." This is true of the market nucleus of the city (market is *pazar*, covered market is *bezistan/bedesten*, market street is *çarşı*, workshop is *dükkan*, warehouse is *mağaza*), for the residential area (neighborhood is *mahalle*, street is often *sokak*, square is *meydan*), for a number of elements of the traditional house,[218] and for most traditional crafts (*sanaat*/*zanaat*), as well as for various realia of everyday life in the cities. Even clock towers—an innovation coming from "Christian Europe"—are referred to in most Balkan languages with a Turkish word coming from Arabic (Turkish *kule* for "tower"). In some cases the whole expression comes from the Ottoman Turkish *saat kule*(*si*): *saat kula* in Macedonian; *sa*(*ha*)*t kula* in Serbian, Bosnian, and Croatian; *kulla e sahatit* in Albanian. Turkish loanwords also appear in the description of the "Byzantine" heritage. Jovan Cvijić presented the Greek *hanji* (innkeeper, Turkish from the Persian *han*) and *bakals* (greengrocer, Turkish from the Arabic *bakkal*) as agents of the Byzantine urban culture.[219] The ultimate irony is that, as a euphemism for designations as "Turkish," "Ottoman," and "Islamic," another Turkish word is used—"Balkan"—which literally means "thickly wooded mountain range." The concept of the "Balkan city" is elaborated in opposition to the "Islamic" and, more specifically, the "Turkish/Ottoman city," yet the vocabulary used to describe this "Balkan city" testifies that it is literally plagiarized from them.

216 Cvijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique*, 201.

217 Cvijić, *Balkansko poluostrvo*, 230.

218 See Tchavdar Marinov's contribution to the present volume.

219 Cvijić, "The Zones of Civilization," 473.

Another feature of the "Balkan cities" that is regularly highlighted is their ethnic and religious diversity.[220] Although this fits nicely with the other clichés about the cultural diversity of the Balkans in general, it is at the same time considered a basic characteristic of the Islamic city (the aforementioned religious and ethnic segregation of the neighborhoods). In fact, this diversity is largely due to the times of Ottoman rule—only then could one speak of not only "ethnic" but also genuine religious diversity and mostly peaceful cohabitation in the "Balkan" cities.

Certainly, studies of Balkan cities were able to point out certain differences between Balkan cities and the ideal type of Islamic cities. This is because the concept is based mostly on the detailed study of several cities in the Arab lands, and as a consequence, all other "Islamic cities" differ to some degree from the ideal model—this is due not only to the important regional differences in the vast world of Islam but also to the individuality of every city. This allowed some scholars to claim that "Balkan cities differ from Muslim cities," neglecting the simple fact that, to some degree, all cities in the Islamic world differ from one another. They prefer to discuss the differences between "Balkan Muslim cities" and Muslim cities in general, without comparing them to any particular Muslim cities. Actually, some Western scholars also accept the view that most of the Balkan cities under the Ottomans differed from the ideal type of "Muslim city."[221]

The difference between the cities in the Balkans and the ideal type of "Islamic city" could be better understood if we take into account the regional differences between cities in the Ottoman Empire. The analysis of vernacular architecture and urban morphology allowed scholars to differentiate between two main groups of cities—those in northwestern Anatolia and in the Balkan provinces versus those in the Arab lands and southeastern Anatolia. According to Pierre Pinon, the boundary between the two types follows the line Antalya-Muğla-Afyon-Ankara-Amasya-Tokat. Cities northwest of this line had a less irregular street network and fewer blind alleys than those in the Arab provinces. Dwelling houses were also different, with premises surrounding a small courtyard in the Arab provinces and a central hall (*sofa* or *hayat*) in the Balkans and northwest Anatolia.[222] The different type of dwelling houses additionally

220 Gavrilova, *Bulgarian Urban Culture*, 56: "Balkan towns, in their majority, were populated by diverse ethnic groups, several among them non-Muslim."

221 Hösch, *Geschichte der Balkanländer*, 99: "Nur in Ausnahmefällen bildete sich ein rein muslimischen Stadttyp heraus (so das 1462 gegründete Sarajevo)."

222 Pierre Pinon, "Les tissus urbains ottomans entre Orient et Occident," in *Proceedings of the 2nd International Meeting on Modern Ottoman Studies and the Turkish Republic* (Leyden:

reflects on the city morphology—houses in the Arab provinces often face the street, cities are usually more densely built, and less space is left for greenery. There are also visible differences in the style of the public buildings, including the religious ones.[223] Given that the boundary between the two types does not coincide with the border between "Europe" and "Asia," or that between the Balkans and Anatolia, Pierre Pinon proposed the term "Turko-Balkan city" as more appropriate for the urban settlements in the Balkans and in northwestern Anatolia.[224]

Not all cities in the Balkans fall into the category "Balkan city" as a specific urban type. It was already mentioned that cities outside the Ottoman Empire are not included in this category, despite being formally located in the peninsula. At a later stage, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a number of cities on the Greek and Adriatic shores and on the islands that were built and fortified in a very different manner (mostly under Venetian rule, some under Genoese rule) fell to the Ottomans but largely preserved their built environment, urban morphology, and appearance. The present-day appearance of the cities in the region also affected the process of outlining the area of distribution of the "Balkan cities." Of crucial importance here is precisely when the policy of "de-Ottomanization" of the cities started and how radical it was: Ottoman urban culture was almost eradicated in the territories that were first included in the new Greek kingdom (Peloponnese, Central Greece, and many islands) and is most visible in some cities from the territories that remained part of the Ottoman Empire until the Balkan Wars (in the Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Northern Greece, etc., and obviously in Turkey), also because most of the preserved buildings, especially the dwelling houses, date from the nineteenth century. Given the well-known "diversity" of the Balkans, the existence of other city types does not seem to pose a problem for speaking of the "Balkan city" as a specific city type. The real challenge comes from the fact that during the Ottoman period, the cities in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire shared similarities not only to one another but also with the cities in the Near East, especially those in northwestern Anatolia.

Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1989), 17; Pierre Pinon, "Essai de définition morphologique de le ville ottomane des XVIII^{e}–XIX^{e} siècles," in *La culture urbaine des Balkans* (*XV^{e}–XIX^{e} siècle*), ed. Nikola Tasić (Belgrade: SANU, 1991), 146.

223 Pinon, "Essai de définition morphologique de le ville ottomane," 148.

224 Pierre Pinon, "The Ottoman Cities of the Balkans," in *The City in the Islamic World*, vol. 1, eds. Renata Holod, Attilio Petruccioli, and André Raymond (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 146–147; Karl Kaser, "The Urban Space of the Turko-Balkan City," *Balkanistic Forum* 14, no. 3 (2011): 63–69.

At the same time, cities in Southeastern Anatolia, although inhabited by a mostly Turkish-speaking population, were much closer to what is usually called "Arab(-Islamic) cities" in terms of urban morphology and house types. Concerning the city types not only the Balkans but also Anatolia turn out to be diverse. Therefore it might be misleading to conceive of the Balkans on the one hand, and the Orient or even only Anatolia on the other, as clearly fixed regional units. If we consider among the "Balkan cities" those in Slovenia and Croatia, and among the "Anatolian cities" those in Kurdistan, we easily discover fundamental differences between the two groups. But if we set aside "Balkan cities" like Zagreb and Dubrovnik and "Anatolian cities" like Diyarbakır and Adana and instead compare, for instance, Edirne and Bursa, Salonica and Izmir, or Sofia and Ankara, we can easily discover similarities between them. In some cases the point of observation also plays a role—experts on the Orient and the Ottoman history discover "Islamic," "Oriental," "Ottoman" or "Turkish" cities in the Balkans. By contrast, when viewed from the Balkans, then Bursa, for instance, might look like a "city that has typical Balkan characteristics."[225]

In sum, despite certain differences from other "Islamic cities" (especially those in the Arab provinces), the cities in the Balkans during the Ottoman period had much more in common with the other cities in the empire or, more generally, with those in the "Orient." Indeed, they are also described in a very similar way, although under different names. In referring to "Balkan-Oriental cities," Bosnian historiography is much closer to the historical reality than those Bulgarian historians who overemphasize the differences between these two types. A source of confusion might be the wider and seemingly neutral usage of the expression "Balkan city" in the sense of "city/-ies in the Balkans." It does not exclude the presence of different types of cities in the region, but the real danger is that urban studies and studies on urban history become limited within the rigid spatial framework of the "region." Certain works on Balkan / Southeast European urban history complain that general works on the urban history of Europe omit the region.[226] It is true that many works on the cities in Europe simply ignore this part of the continent, but the omission is

225 Hüseyin Mevsim, "Bursa—'Balkanskiyat grad' v Mala Aziya," *Balkanistic Forum* 14, no. 3 (2011): 97–104. To explain the similarities, the author points to the large number of settlers from the Balkans.

226 Grothusen, "Städtewesen und nationale Emanzipation," 73; Klaus Roth, "Bürgertum und bürgerliche Kultur in Südosteuropa. Ein Beitrag zur Modernisierungsdiskussion," in *Soll und Haben. Alltag und Lebensformen bürgerlicher Kultur*, ed. Ueli Gyr (Zürich: Officin, 1995), 245.

justified—to present the cities in the Balkans would also mean including the whole debate about Oriental/Islamic/Ottoman cities.

Concerning the notion of the "Southeast European city," it might designate two different things, closely following the two main usages of the term "Southeastern Europe" vis-à-vis the term "Balkans." In Bulgarian historiography, for instance, the designation "Southeast European city" is a euphonic and more prestigious synonym for the "Balkan city."[227] For German-speaking academic milieus, the term "Southeast European city" is a way to designate the cities in this region but not a city type. According to Wolfgang Höpken, only in part of the region could one speak of a specific urban type; he refers to the concept of "Balkan city" as such a specific type.[228] From this perspective the "Southeast European city" is not identical to the "Balkan city." It should be noted that some of the earliest works on "the city in Southeastern Europe" in German are devoted to cities created by German settlers mostly in the lands of the Hungarian crown,[229] that is, to cities of a completely different type located outside the Balkans proper.

The Urban Network and Its Center

Cities are not only similar to or different from one another—they are interconnected, they form urban networks, and in order to identify such networks, one needs above all to identify their centers. The task here is rather easy, because from late antiquity until the present day, the biggest center in the Balkans has undoubtedly been Constantinople/Istanbul. It was "the City" not only for Byzantium but also for neighboring medieval states. This domination became even more powerful in the Ottoman period, when the whole peninsula was included in one single empire and the city became its capital. All other urban settlements were small local centers overshadowed by this mega-center. Until the nineteenth century, even towns in otherwise autonomous Wallachia and Moldavia were politically, culturally, and commercially oriented toward

227 See, for instance, the above-quoted volume *Yugoiztochnoevropeyskiyat grad i săvremennostta na minaloto*; the first part of the book is called "The Cultural Context of the Balkan City."

228 Wolfgang Höpken, "Die 'südosteuropäische Stadt,'" in *Urbanisierung und Stadtentwicklung in Südosteuropa vom 19. bis zum 21. Jahrhundert* (*Südosteuropa-Jahrbuch*, vol. 37), eds. Thomas M. Bohn and Marie-Janine Calic (Munich and Berlin: Otto Sagner, 2010), 67.

229 Konrad Schünemann, *Die Entstehung des Städtewesens in Südosteuropa* (Breslau u. Oppeln: Priebatsch [1929]); Walter Hildebrandt, "Die Stadt in Südosteuropa," *Leipziger Vierteljahrsschrift für Südosteuropa* 3 (1939): 153–177; Klaus-Detlev Grothusen, *Entstehung und Geschichte Zagrebs bis zum Ausgang des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1967).

Constantinople.[230] Likewise, for all these centuries, Constantinople has been and still is the biggest center for Anatolia. The very location of the megapolis is one of the reasons for examining the Balkan and Anatolian urban settlements together as part of a common "Balkan-Anatolian urban network."[231]

For the Byzantines, Constantinople was more than a capital city—to a large extent, the state was identified with it. Foreign observers and later historians shared the same view, and the old name of the city even started to be used in historiography to refer to the empire as a whole. Later, the Ottomans inherited the perception of Constantinople as a unique and unrivaled center, and from this point of view, the "European" provinces were not considered superior to the "Asian" ones. Let us take just one one example: exiles. Convicted leaders of the Bulgarian national movement from the second half of the nineteenth century were usually exiled to the city of Diyarbekir/Diyarbakır in Southeastern Anatolia. Thus Bulgarian historiography started to perceive Diyarbekir as a kind of "Ottoman Siberia." At the same time, Ottoman archives provide evidence that many people were exiled into cities in the "European provinces." Researching the city of Sofia, I found dozens of such cases from the first half of the nineteenth century.[232] Another interesting case was the story of a graduate of the Military Medical High School named Dimitraki, who in 1862 refused to comply with his appointment as pharmacist in Sofia and preferred to stay in the capital.[233] At first glance, this reaction might seem hard to explain—Dimitraki was appointed in the "European" part of the empire, while some of his colleagues were sent to places as remote as Yemen. Still, seen from Constantinople, the interior of the Balkans was a faraway province hardly better than many others.

In addition, until the nineteenth century, when the capitals of the new Balkan states were established, there were no big cities in the Balkans and Anatolia that could be regarded as centers of a separate and relatively independent urban network. The biggest cities until the nineteenth century—Adrianople/Edirne and Bursa, the former capitals of the Ottoman state—were both too closely located to Constantinople and thus could not play a role on their own in a larger area. In the nineteenth century they were surpassed by

230 Simion Câlţia, "Fenomenul urban în Ţara Românească şi Moldovă în secolele 16–18," *Studii şi articole de istorie* 68 (2003): 69.

231 Maurice Cerasi, "Il sistema urbano diffuso: la rete urbana anatolico-balcanica nei secoli XVIII–XIX," *Storia urbana* 30 (1985): 19–61.

232 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), C.ZB, 39/1926; BOA, HAT, 516/25221; BOA, C.ZB, 67/3317; BOA, HAT, 416/21517; BOA, C.ZB, 32/1580, etc.

233 BOA, A.MKT.NZD, 283/23.

Salonica and Izmir, both of which were port cities benefiting from commercial growth due to steam navigation and the liberalization of foreign trade. Neither the former capitals of the medieval Balkan states (such as Tărnovo, Skopje, and Vidin) nor Konya, the capital of the Sultanate of Rum in Anatolia, were anything more than local centers in the Ottoman period. By contrast, in the Arab provinces there were important cities such as Damascus (together with Aleppo) and Cairo, which could be regarded as metropoles of the respective areas. Thus we can outline the zone of direct domination of Constantinople not only as a political capital of the empire but also as the main urban center in economic and social terms for the Balkans and Anatolia.

There is an established tradition of presenting Constantinople/Istanbul as city "between East and West," as a "crossroads" or "intersection" of different cultures and civilizations.[234] These widely used clichés reveal the perception that there were two separate types of cultures—Christian and European on one side (and Balkan as part of it), Islamic and Oriental on the other. The question is how these cultures remained separate for centuries and only "intersected" in the imperial capital. This perspective makes it seem as if the biggest city in the region was not a center in its own right, even for the territories it directly dominated. Even more unsound are the otherwise pleasant-sounding comments about Istanbul as a "city on two continents"—this is as formally true and practically meaningless as the statement that London straddles both of the earth's hemispheres.

Similarly, Stevan K. Pavlowitch wrote that "the Balkans have had three great eccentric capitals: Constantinople, Vienna and Paris . . . Constantinople on the very edge of the Balkans was the seat of the Ottoman Porte."[235] Leaving aside Vienna and Paris, what does it mean for an urban network to have its center "on the very edge"? And if we do examine Vienna, is it not more productive to try to analyze two separate networks—one centered on Istanbul and another one on Vienna (plus Budapest since the nineteenth century)? Istanbul was not "on the very edge" of the Balkans but in the very center of the Balkan-Anatolian urban network. There are no urban networks with several "eccentric" capitals nor urban cultures without their own big centers. Similarly, in an article mentioned above, Wendy Bracewell and Alexander Drace-Francis note that " . . . for the most of the last two thousand years it [Southeastern Europe] has been ruled from outside or from its margin . . ."[236] Obviously, rule "from its

234 *Istanbul à la jonction des cultures balkaniques, méditerranéennes, slaves et orientales aux XVI-XIX^e s.* (Bucharest: AIESEE, 1977).

235 Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans*, 332.

236 Bracewell and Drace-Francis, "South-Eastern Europe: History, Concepts, Boundaries," 61.

margin" here refers to the administration of the Byzantine emperors and Ottoman sultans in Constantinople. What is problematic here is the vantage point—both politically and culturally, the Balkans were part of the vast periphery of the capital, not the other way round.

It is also disputable to what extent cities in Anatolia and in the Balkans can be perceived as part of two different urban networks "separated by water." In physical geography water "separates" continents and islands, but this is not necessarily true of human geography. Connections by sea were very important not only in ancient times but also later for Byzantine cities, as most of the major ones were port cities, while connections by land remained rather poor.[237] Starting in the mid-nineteenth century, steam navigation gave port cities unprecedented advantages. Works on the Balkans usually focus on land routes, often underlining how difficult they were due to the rugged terrain; they mention boating on the Danube but often ignore sea routes.[238] This is understandable—Balkan studies is interested in roads "in the Balkans," while sea routes not only do not leave recognizable physical traces but are formally located outside the Balkan peninsula. Ignoring sea routes means also ignoring the most important connections for the Balkans both with the West and the Near East, as well as between the port cities in the region.

It could be argued that Constantinople was built, and its center is still located, on the "European" side of the Bosporus, but this has nothing to do with the continental division between "Europe" and "Asia." The city of Byzantium was sited (around 660 BCE) on this particular side in order to benefit from the convenient natural harbor of the Golden Horn. The city was located not so much with regard to the landmass as with regard to the sea.

Present-day Istanbul is effectively divided by the Bosporus into "European" and "Asian" parts. For city life the strait of the Bosporus is an important divide and has major practical implications—the construction of the bridges over it (completed in 1973, 1988, and 2016) and then of a tunnel under it (completed in 2013) are among the most important infrastructural projects not only for the city but for all of Turkey. Still, at the level of the urban network of Turkey as a whole, the Bosporus has not made transport connections with Anatolia

237 Charalambos Bouras, "Aspects of the Byzantine City: Eighth–Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 504; Cf. Fine, *The Early Medieval Balkans*, 4: "For territories near the water, communications by sea were more important than by land . . . most of the largest Balkan cities in the Middle Ages were seaports."

238 Kaser, *Südosteuropäische Geschichte*, 2nd ed. (2002), 36–39.

substantially more difficult than those with the Balkans. As a result, Istanbul remained by far the largest city in the Republic of Turkey despite being cut from almost all of its Balkan hinterland.

At the level of the city itself, the question about its "European part" is expressed differently. In the late Middle Ages the city had a "European" neighborhood: Galata, where the Genoese, and later other settlers from Western Europe, lived from the last centuries of Byzantium onwards. Later, this part started to be considered "European," in contrast to the rest of the city where the local people (Moslems/Turks, Orthodox/Greeks, Armenians, and Jews) lived, independently of the fact that in all cases, the neighborhoods were on the "European" side of the Bosporus.

The Debate Over the Pre-Ottoman Heritage

A key argument for presenting cities in the Balkans from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century as different from other "Islamic"/"Oriental"/"Ottoman" cities is their long pre-Ottoman history, starting in ancient times with the ancient Greek cities (some add the Thracian and Illyrian "cities"), later the Roman and finally the Byzantine and other medieval cities. Various Balkan scholars insist on the continuity of this rich heritage, which formed the basis of urban life under the Ottomans. It is claimed that the Ottomans inherited "a fully developed urban network" and that there were no profound changes in the urban structure of the existing cities. Everything valuable built under the Ottomans is now attributed to the local people. Even for the few mosques that were preserved and recognized as "historical" and/or "architectural" monuments, it is claimed that the local Christians constructed them for their Muslim masters.[239] In other cases it is claimed that the mosques were built in a specific original style different from the Ottoman one: an Albanian book from the late communist period insists that the Great Mosque in Tirana did not have a typical Ottoman appearance.[240] Official historiography in communist countries had one more argument, which some later works repeated: both pre-Ottoman and Ottoman cities were "feudal," and therefore there could not be any profound change from one urban type to another.[241] On the whole, Balkan cities from

239 Harbova, *Gradoustroystvo i arhitektura po bălgarskite zemi prez XV–XVIII vek*, 52 and 102.

240 Koço Miho, *Trajta të profilit urbanistik të qytetit të Tiranës* (Tirana: 8 Nentori, 1987), 108.

241 Todorov, *The Balkan City*, 79ff; Dimitrov, "Za priemstvenostta v razvitieto na balkanskite gradove," 7–8, 16; Maria Todorova, "The Ottoman Legacy in the Balkans," in *The Imperial Legacy: The Ottoman Imprint on the Balkans and the Middle East*, ed. Carl L. Brown (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 60: "Although urban life in the Balkans had an uninterrupted tradition, it never acquired the autonomous role it had in the West, with a

the fifteenth century onwards were Byzantine cities modified by Oriental influences.[242]

The first major problem is that this picture has almost nothing to do with the conclusions of the studies on late Byzantine cities, which highlight (and often exaggerate) not only the destruction following the Ottoman invasion but also the agony of urban life in Byzantium during the preceding centuries. As a consequence, in one collection of essays, the articles on the medieval period asserted that Byzantine cities declined long before Ottoman rule, while in the same volume the contributions on the cities under the Ottomans stated that the traditions of Byzantine urban life were particularly viable and survived the Ottoman conquest.[243]

One must take into account the conflicting interpretations about the consequences of the Ottoman conquest itself. In Balkan historiographies the effects of the conquest are presented according to two main explanatory models. The first one, which appeared earlier and is much more common, insists on the catastrophic consequences of the Ottoman invasion, which led to a collapse of the whole medieval civilization in the area and largely to the physical destruction of the medieval cities and the extermination or flight of the urban population, especially of the local elites. From this perspective the medieval urban heritage survived only in rare cases and is represented by some more solid buildings, mainly churches, as well as certain fortresses; some of its remnants are rediscovered during archaeological excavations. The second explanatory model appeared more recently and is actually an attempt to explain why the Ottoman Empire featured a prosperous and relatively sophisticated urban life. Turkish historiography explained this phenomenon as a result of the settlement of new urban dwellers and the beneficial policies of the Ottoman state and its elite. In response, some Balkan historians started to stress the continuity of urban life from the Middle Ages into the Ottoman period, thus leaving little room to import a new "Oriental" urban culture. In summary, the two explanatory models often coexist in contemporary Balkan historiographies: the catastrophic theory explains why the remnants of pre-Ottoman cities are

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strong independent commercial and industrial class. The Balkan city was incorporated in the Ottoman system as a completely constructed feudal category and was entirely subordinated to the state"; see also Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 173.

242 Gavrilova, *Bulgarian Urban Culture*, 24: "Balkan cities, molded by the Byzantinism and retaining many features of Byzantine cities . . . now faced new and no less strong or influential oriental tradition."

243 *Die Stadt in Südosteuropa—Struktur und Geschichte*, ed. Walter Althammer (Munich: Südosteuropa Gesellschaft, 1968). Compare p. 33 and especially p. 41 to p. 102 and p. 129.

usually unimpressive and few in number, while the continuity theory makes it possible to appropriate the achievements of Ottoman urban culture as part of the respective national (or in some cases "common Balkan") heritage.

Sources on Byzantine cities are not only much more scanty but also of a different nature, and that makes comparisons very difficult and their conclusions uncertain. While Ottoman studies rely mainly on various tax and population registers, court proceedings, and city plans (for later periods), the Byzantine cities are studied mostly on the basis of archaeological excavations and the careful analysis of scattered notes in hagiography, chronicles, and other narrative sources.[244] In some cases, Ottoman archival sources are even used in the attempts to reconstruct the administrative organization and urban life in medieval pre-Ottoman cities,[245] implicitly assuming that these did not change substantially with the Ottoman conquest.

Those referring to the Byzantine heritage of the Ottoman cities in the Balkans actually take as their starting point the Ottoman city and "discover" the Byzantine roots of its traits. Thus some scholars insist that the Byzantine city was divided into residential neighborhoods just like the Ottoman city was divided into *mahalle*s, that there were guild organizations just like the later *esnaf*s, and so on.[246] At the same time, works that constantly speak of "continuity" simply ignore other problems that take center stage in studies on late Byzantine cities, like the general transformation of the urban network into a network of fortified places in the sixth and seventh centuries (they were even called by a different name—*kastron*, from the Latin *castrum*—thus underlining their primarily military functions),[247] the nature and extent of the urban revival in the tenth and eleventh centuries and the stagnation that followed,[248] or the spatial separation in many cases of the town from the administrative and military stronghold.[249] It is forgotten that, unlike in Islamic and Ottoman

244 Bouras, "Aspects of the Byzantine City," 498–500.

245 Dmitriy I. Polivyanni, *Srednovekovniyat bălgarski grad prez XIII–XIV vek. Ochertsi* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1989), 18. In this case the term "medieval Balkan city" is a collective noun designating Byzantine, Bulgarian, and Serbian cities in the region (ibid., 164ff.).

246 Dimitrov, "Za priemstvenostta v razvitieto na balkanskite gradove," 8 ff.

247 Wolfram Brandes, *Die Städte Kleinasiens im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1989).

248 Klaus-Peter Matschke, "Grundzüge des byzantinischen Städtewesens vom 11. bis 15. Jahrhundert," in *Die byzantinische Stadt im Rahmen der allgemeinen Stadtentwicklung*, ed. Klaus-Peter Matschke (Leipzig: Leipziger Univ.-Verl., 1995), 34–35, 60.

249 Hans-Wilhelm Haussig, "Die byzantinische Stadt," In *Die Stadt in Südosteuropa*, 37: "Trennung von Stadt und administrativem und militarischem Stützpunkt"; Matschke, "Grundzüge des byzantinischen Städtewesens," 30.

cities, in Byzantine cities the market did not play a central role.[250] Even features of Byzantine cities like narrow and irregular streets or the burials within the cities[251] that could serve as evidence of continuity are not mentioned, because they contradict the myth of the illustrious Byzantino-Slavic medieval urban civilization. Instead, there are more general comments about continuities in "building techniques," "architectural style," and "urban layout."

At least one of the elements of the "continuity" actually upends the whole argument: it is often stressed that both Byzantine and Ottoman cities were not independent bodies but were fully subordinated to the central power.[252] This statement could also be regarded as an implicit reaction to the widely known comment that Islamic/Oriental cities lacked municipal traditions—it turns out that this feature of the cities in the region was not something introduced by the Ottoman invasions but was a pre-existing reality in the Balkans. The problem in this case is that one would expect a full-scale transformation of urban life following political change on the macro level.

While the first question is to what extent one could speak of the continuity of urban development from the pre-Ottoman to the Ottoman period, the second and even more important problem is the spatial distribution of the medieval heritage. Works in the field of Balkan studies invariably limit their focus to the Balkans, and continuity from Byzantine times is sought and "discovered" only in the cities in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire, that is, in the Balkan cities. For example, at one of the conferences about the Balkan cities (Venice, 1971), the sole Turkish participant (Gönül Tankut), who made a presentation on the urban structure of the Ottoman cities, was criticized on the grounds that, concerning the Balkan territories, "she paid almost no attention to the foundations on which they [the Ottoman cities] arose; that is, she forgot the Byzantine, the Bulgarian, and so on medieval city."[253] It is easy to imagine a Turkish scholar forgetting or at least minimizing the Byzantine heritage when talking about Ottoman cities. No less problematic is the reaction of her critics who see this heritage only in the Balkan territories. Similarly, urban heritage from ancient times is often seen only within the limits of "Europe."[254]

250 Matschke, "Grundzüge des byzantinischen Städtewesens," 39–40.

251 Bouras, "Aspects of the Byzantine City," 508 ("streets were narrow, seldom straight, and of variable width; sometimes they were blind alleys"), 527 ("Little by little, burial grounds came to be inside the walls of cities, in a departure from the practices of antiquity").

252 See footnote 241.

253 Tăpkova-Zaimova and Traikov, "Mezhdunaroden colloquium văv Venetzia," 160.

254 See the comment of Bogdan Bogdanov in "Table ronde: Les Balkans—traditions et changements. Crise des identités et communications interculturelles," 208: "Il y a des

Pierre Pinon holds that precisely the Byzantine heritage was the basis of the differences dividing the Ottoman cities in the Balkans and northwestern Anatolia from those in the Arab provinces. In his opinion, all these cities (aside from the newly created ones) were not "Ottoman" but "Ottomanized."[255] In other cases, the continuity from late Byzantine to Ottoman cities was also demonstrated in the case of cities in Eastern Anatolia like Trebizond/Trabzon.[256] Many Balkanists have argued that the most important cities in the Balkans already existed before Ottoman rule, but the same is also widely accepted for cities in Anatolia.[257] More generally, urban development always shows continuity, and all "Islamic" cities had a great deal in common with pre-Islamic ones, which, as mentioned, led Eugen Wirth (who was not discussing the Balkans specifically) to defend the use of the more general term "Oriental cities."

At the same time, in both the Balkans and Anatolia, many new towns were founded or emerged during the Ottoman period—often near the main roads, on the basis of rich religious foundations (*vakıf*), but also as administrative and market centers. These newly founded cities were usually smaller, but there were many of them. According to Guncho Gunchev, a specialist in human geography who worked in the late interwar period, among the cities in Bulgaria whose creation could be dated, twenty-nine existed before the Ottoman conquest, and fifty-three arose under Ottoman rule.[258] It should be added that the existing cities underwent varying degrees of reconstruction, which often completely transformed their appearance.[259] For instance, in Sofia the relics of ancient and medieval times were rediscovered by scholars only during the nineteenth and especially the twentieth century, but Paul Ricaut, who passed through the city in the seventeenth century, described it as "a place so wholly Turkish, that there is nothing in it that appears more antique than the Turks

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siècles, quand les Romains dispersaient la civilization romane, ils avaient parsemé l'Europe de villes étonnamment pareilles."

255 Pinon, "Essai de définition," 144, 147.

256 Anthony Bryer, "The Structure of the Late Byzantine Town: *Dioikismos* and the *Mesoi*," in *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society*, eds. Anthony Bryer and Heath Lowry (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1986), 263–279.

257 Friedrich-Karl Kienitz, *Städte unter dem Halbmond. Geschichte und Kultur der Städter in Anatolien und auf dem Balkanhalbinsel im Zeitalter der Sultanen 1071–1922* (Munich: Beck, 1972), 223. Concerning the cities under the Seldjuks, see "Aber diese Städte Anatoliens waren nur in seltenen Ausnahmefällen türkische Neugründungen."

258 Guncho Gunchev, "Bălgarskite selishta," *Arhiv za poselishtni prouchvaniya* 2, nos. 3–4 (1941): 273.

259 Kiel, "Urban Development in Bulgaria in the Turkish Period," 83ff.

themselves."[260] Still, when writing about Sofia during the Ottoman period, Bulgarian historians emphasized the continuity from the medieval period.[261]

In addition, it must be stressed that there were considerable differences from one place to another, and even within a relatively small territory, one could find cities with very different urban structures and appearances.[262] The profile of the individual cities does not always correspond to the general trends at the macro-regional level—just as there are cities with visible traces from the Byzantine period in Eastern Anatolia (Trebizond), there are also cities founded by the Ottomans in the Western Balkans (Sarajevo). From this perspective it is equally problematic that in Balkan studies, the Byzantine legacy is usually regarded as characteristic for all cities in the Balkans.

The Cities in the Age of Reforms in the Ottoman Empire

National historiographies in the Balkan countries present the urban modernization of the nineteenth and early twentieth century as a re-Europeanization after "centuries of foreign rule." Two explanatory models are used. First, urban modernization is presented as a result of the establishment of the respective national state and its policy of modernization and Europeanization of the cities. The largest number of works deal with the capitals of the newly established states, where the changes were most substantial. This approach is clearly visible in all historiographies in the region, and even in the Bosnian case, most scholars insist that urban modernization took place under Habsburg administration (1878–1918), although they are usually very critical of Habsburg rule.

In addition, some historiographies present urban modernization in the late Ottoman period as a result of the "national revival" (Bulgaria, Albania), that is, during the last decades or even the last century under Ottoman rule. This is regarded as a process that developed within the respective national community and not as an outcome of the policies of the Ottoman state. Ziya Shkodra

260 Paul Rycaut, *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, 3rd ed. (London: Charles Brome, 1686), 397.

261 Kozhuharov, "Arhitectura i stroitelstvo prez Văzrazhdaneto," 121 ff.; Svetlana Ivanova, "Sofia," in *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 732.

262 Grigor Boykov, "Balkan City or Ottoman City? A Study on the Models of Urban Development in Ottoman Upper Thrace, from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century," in *Proceedings of the Third International Congress on the Islamic Civilisation in the Balkans 1–5 November 2006, Bucharest, Romania* (Istanbul: IRCICA, 2010), 69–85; Phokion Kotzageorgis, "New Towns and Old Towns in the Ottoman Balkans: Two Case Studies from Northern Greece," in *Festschrift in Honor of Ioannis P. Theocharides*, vol. 2, *Studies on the Ottoman Empire and Turkey*, eds. Evangelia Balta, Georgios Salakidis, and Theoharis Stavrides (Istanbul: ISIS [2014]), 273–291.

even insists that the renewal of Albanian cities happened despite the resistance of the authorities.[263] In the study quoted above, Raina Gavrilova seconded the opinion that Oriental urban life was "slow to change" but added: "Of course, that was not exactly the case in the Balkans, especially in the post-eighteenth century period."[264] This remark illustrates, in at least two respects, the way the urban history of the country and region is usually interpreted in Bulgarian historiography. First, "changes" are seen only in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Second, it is believed that the process started in the eighteenth century, because the modernization of "Bulgarian cities" is regarded as a result of the "Bulgarian Revival," and the widely accepted (although debatable) view that it started at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

In both cases (during the "national revival" and after the "liberation"), the process of urban modernization is perceived as a transformation from "Ottoman" to "national/European" cities.[265] In both cases, national historiographies in the Balkans examine nineteenth-century urban modernization in connection with the modernization processes in their own community. This is contrasted with the image of an "unchanging Orient" where cities, like everything else, remained frozen in time. Balkan historians focus on the impact of the newly established national state and the innovative trends in their own community but most often neglect the policy of urban modernization launched by the Ottoman authorities during the Tanzimat in the nineteenth century.[266]

First of all, reform policies in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire were first and most distinctly felt in the cities, due to their role as administrative centers. At that time new institutions of local and urban administration were created based on a standardized model. Moreover, within the reformed administration, new city councils (*belediye*) were created to deal with urban

263 Ziya Shkodra, *Qyteti shqiptar gjatë Rilindjes Kombëtare* (Tirana: Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Historisë, 1984), 350.

264 Gavrilova, *Bulgarian Urban Culture*, 75.

265 Georges Castellan, "Les fonctions culturelles de la ville du Sud-Est européen XVIII^{e}–XX^{e} siècle," *Etudes balkaniques* 17, no. 4 (1980): 39: "L'évolution des fonctions culturelles de la ville balkanique s'inscrit dans une dialectique ville ottomane—ville nationale, mais avec une connotation spécifique de 'ville nationale européenne.' Car la pénétration des techniques, des marchandises et des idées de l'Occident a sculpté sa physionomie à l'époque récente."

266 Paul Dumont and François Georgeon, eds. *Villes ottomanes à la fin de l'Empire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992); Jean-Luc Arnaud, "Tradition and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century: Modernization of the Cities of the Ottoman Empire (1800–1920)," in *The City in the Islamic World*, vol. 2, 953–975.

affairs and public utilities.[267] The modernized administration launched a new type of urban policy. What was recommended and, in part, implemented included the enlargement and pavement of the existing main streets, the creation of a street grid when possible (usually after fires), new buildings of brick and stone instead of flammable and non-durable materials, the construction of modern infrastructure (primarily street lighting), and the construction of large and imposing public buildings (town halls, military barracks, schools, hospitals, post offices, prisons) and big public spaces (parks, squares).[268] Obviously these policies could not produce immediate results everywhere—the measures for modernizing the provincial cities started mainly in the 1860s and achieved more visible results at the time of Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876–1909). In the long term, urban modernization under the late Ottoman administration was overshadowed by the more radical measures implemented in subsequent decades in the new national states, including Turkey. Still, compared with other cases, Ottoman cities' appearance and urban structure changed very rapidly, due to the limited number of solid constructions. The geographer Anastas Ishirkov noted the paradox that cities of "Oriental type" were much more readily transformed into modern cities than the cities of "Mediterranean type."[269] Thus one of the main disadvantages of the Ottoman cities—the poorly built houses—in practice facilitated the implementation of modernizing projects. Again, it must be emphasized that in the end, this full-scale modernization deprived the cities of most of their legacy in terms of the built environment.

Most of the historians in the Balkan countries underestimated or ignored the policy of urban modernization launched by the Ottoman authorities during the nineteenth-century reforms.[270] Even studies that take this policy into account could still present everything in a "Balkan" context. For instance, in her book *Urban Transformation in the Balkans* (*1820–1920*), Alexandra Yerolympos first presents the plan for modernization of the new Balkan states and only then presents urban modernization in the Ottoman Empire. To a certain extent this approach is justified, because political measures for urban modernization in Greece and the Danubian principalities preceded those in

267 İlber Ortaylı, *Tanzimattan sonra mahalli idareler* (*1840–1878*) (Ankara: TTK, 2000; 1st ed., 1974), 119 ff. Citations are to the 2000 edition.

268 Stéphane Yerasimos, "A propos des réformes urbaines des Tanzimat," in *Villes ottomanes à la fin de l'Empire*, 17–32.

269 Ishirkov, "Harakterni cherti na gradovete v Tsarstvo Bălgaria," 13.

270 E.g., Höpken, "Die 'südosteuropäische Stadt,'" 70; Dobrinka Parusheva, "Balkanski granitsi: prostanstvo za istoriyata," in *Dvuvekovniyat păt na edno ponyatie. "Balkanskiyat poluostrov"* (*1808–2008*), 125.

the Ottoman Empire; they were also more radical and more widely implemented. But Alexandra Yerolympos presents the plan for the modernization of Skopje and the policy of urban modernization in Bulgaria, and only after that the same process in the Ottoman Empire, even if in the cases of Bulgaria, Macedonia, and even Northern Greece, urban modernization started under Ottoman rule.[271] The book considers only cities in the Balkans: it pays special attention to Salonica/Thessaloniki and Adrianople/Edirne but not to Smyrna/Izmir or Trebizond/Trabzon.

In fact, the nineteenth-century reforms led to a further unification of the institutions in Ottoman provinces, and for this reason, most changes went in parallel for all Ottoman cities. This is especially true of the measures to modernize local administration (including the construction of the most important public buildings) and the security measures (telegraph, street lighting, public sanitation), which were implemented roughly at the same time in all administrative centers. Given the crucial role that enterprising provincial governors played in city modernization,[272] it must be emphasized that most of these governors served at various places in both the "European" and "non-European" provinces of the Empire. For example, Midhat Pasha, the first governor of the Danube Vilayet (1864–1868), who is often praised for modernizing its center, Rustchuk/Ruse, as well as, to a lesser extent, many other towns in the province, subsequently implemented similar reforms in Baghdad, later in Damascus, and also, for a shorter time, in Izmir.[273] Moreover, eight out of twelve governors of the Danube Vilayet were also governors in Izmir (the center of the vilayet of Aydın).[274] Literally all changes in nineteenth-century "Balkan cities" are also well attested in cities in Anatolia and the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire.[275]

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271 Alexandra Yerolympos, *Urban Transformation in the Balkans (1820–1920): Aspects of Balkan Town Planning and the Remaking of Thessaloniki* (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1996), 44, 45, and 50.

272 François Georgeon, "Du poil de chèvre au kalpak: l'évolution d'Ankara au dernier siècle de l'Empire ottoman," in *Villes ottomanes à la fin de l'Empire*, 125.

273 *Uluslararası Midhat Paşa Semineri: bildiriler ve tartışmalar, Edirne, 8–10 Mayıs 1984* (Ankara: TTK, 1986).

274 Hans-Jürgen Kornrumpf, *Die Territorialverwaltung im ostlichen tei der europäischen Türkei vom Erlass der Vilayetsordnung (1864) bis zum Berliner Kongress (1878)* (Freiburg: Schwarz, 1976).

275 Aktüre, *19. yüzyıl sonunda Anadolu kenti*; Çadırcı, *Tanzimat döneminde Anadolu kentlerinin sosyal ve ekonomik yapıları*; Béatrice Saint-Laurent, "Un amateur de théâtre: Ahmed Vefik Pacha et le remodelage de Bursa dans le dernier tiers du XIX siècle," in *Villes ottomanes à la fin de l'Empire*, 95–114; Mahmoud Yazbak, *Haifa in the Late Ottoman Period, 1864–1914:*

Concerning the modernization of urban life within the Ottoman Empire, official historiography under the communist regime presented "the development of capitalist relations" before the creation of the respective national state as an achievement of their own bourgeoisie. Indeed, in some cases it was explicitly pointed out that there were no such developments among Muslims.[276] Still, it is a legitimate question to what extent the religious and ethnic composition of a city had an impact on its modernization. It is often believed that a Christian majority in a city's population was a factor encouraging urban changes, but even in this case, not all of these cities were necessarily located in the European provinces of the empire: during the late Ottoman period Beirut (whose population was predominantly Christian) was visibly more Europeanized than Salonica, which looked rather like a "typical Turkish town."[277] The image of the "conquering Balkan Orthodox merchant" (to use Traian Stoianovich's expression), at the same time, downplays evidence of the involvement of Moslems in trade, as well as, to a certain extent, the presence of Christians in Anatolia and the Near East. In fact, the most important role was played by the presence of large colonies of foreigners, which was visible in big port cities like Izmir as well as in the Ottoman capital, Constantinople.

Certainly there were considerable differences among the individual cities in the modernization and Europeanization process. The capital and the major and fastest-growing cities developed the most; main administrative centers were certainly privileged. In some cases innovative measures were applied only to parts of the cities, such as the city center (in some case a new administrative center emerged) and more dynamic areas inhabited by foreigners and Levantines, such as Beyoğlu and Galata (the "Sixth District") in Constantinople. In some regards, cities in Anatolia and the Arab provinces lagged behind cities of similar size and importance in the Balkans, but it was not a general rule, and there was no considerable gap between the "cities in the European provinces" and those in the other provinces. Concerning the settlement network, the European provinces on the whole had a higher percentage

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A Muslim Town in Transition (Leiden: Brill, 1998); Jens Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005); Sibel Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir: The Rise of a Cosmopolitan Port, 1840–1880* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

276 Nikolai Todorov, "Social Structures in the Balkans during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Etudes balkaniques* 22, no. 4 (1985): 57–58.

277 Paul Dumont, "Salonica and Beirut: The Reshaping of Two Ottoman Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean: The Balkans and the Middle East Compared*, 195.

of urban population (and were also more densely populated on average), but there were also considerable regional differences.[278] For instance, Serbia, one of the first provinces in the European part of the empire to secede and become a separate state, had a very low level of urbanization, which grew rather slowly and remained below the average for the Ottoman Empire as a whole, as well as the other Balkan countries, with the exception of Montenegro.[279] In practical terms, it was not the cities in the Balkan provinces but port cities that were "closer" to Europe,[280] because steam navigation in the nineteenth century made transport by water faster and more convenient than ever before; only by the end of the century did railways appear as an alternative. On the macro level, the geography of urban modernization in the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century does not coincide with the divide between cities in the "European" and the "non-European" provinces but mostly between port cities and cities in the interior.

Cities in the National States

The creation of the individual national states in the region had a considerable impact on urban development in many regards. Before briefly addressing them, it must be emphasized that the national framework also profoundly shaped studies on the topic, which, despite all attempts to outline general trends and similar characteristics, usually examine the process on a national scale in one specific country. That also results in part from the nature of the available statistical data, which is collected and processed by statistical authorities on a national level and is not always comparable with data from neighboring countries.[281] It must be added that the attempts to present a general overview of urban and regional processes in the region often ignore Turkey. Just as the

278 Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 781.

279 The urban population in Serbia was only 6.5 percent in 1834, 8 percent in 1859, 9.5 percent in 1866, 10.2 percent in 1874, and 12 percent in 1884. It reached 14 percent in 1900 and did not change significantly until the Balkan Wars. Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, 117–118, 240; Cvijić, *Balkansko poluostrvo*, 224.

280 *Port-Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean, 1800–1914*, eds. Ç. Keyder, Y.E. Özveren, and D. Quataert, *Review* 16, no. 4 (1993).

281 In more detail: Alexander Vezenkov, "Urbanizarea şi reţeaua urbană în Sud-Estul Europei," in *Exerciţii întru cunoaştere. Societate şi mentalităţi în noi abordări istoriografice*, eds. Mirela-Luminiţa Murgescu and Simion Câlţia (Iaşi: Dominor, 2003), 111–131.

general works on Balkan history do not include Turkey after World War I, books devoted to the capitals in the region do not cover Ankara.[282]

In the newly established Balkan states, the process of "de-Ottomanization" increased speed in several regards. The intentional destruction of mosques and other buildings typical of "Turkish" rule was the most visible phenomenon.[283] More generally, urban modernization and Europeanization were directly related to a brutal transformation of the existing urban fabric, which, intentionally or unintentionally, also turned into a process of de-Ottomanization; this massive destruction of the Ottoman urban legacy was a general trend that also took place in Turkey. The phenomenon was most pronounced in rapidly developing cities, especially in the new capitals. Even in Sarajevo—a city founded by the Ottomans and inhabited predominantly by Muslims, where the Ottoman legacy is consciously preserved—the architectural heritage of four decades of Habsburg administration is no less visible than the heritage left after four centuries of Ottoman rule.[284] The exodus of the majority of the Muslims and especially of their elites led to a collapse of Ottoman urban culture in most of the newly established states. By contrast, the proportion of people from the ethnic majority of the country in the urban population increased, especially at the expense of emigrating Turks/Muslims. The creation of the national states led to the gradual crystallization of separate urban networks dominated by the respective new capital. In all cases there is a clear trend towards faster modernization and monocentric growth of the capital city, despite the fact that, aside from Bucharest, these were initially rather small towns. Some of them were chosen as capitals for historical reasons (Athens). Others were chosen because they were centrally located within the state's

282 Harald Heppner, ed., *Hauptstädte in Südosteuropa: Geschichte, Funktion, nationale Symbolkraft* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1994); Harald Heppner, ed., *Hauptstädte zwischen Save, Bosporus und Dnjepr: Geschichte—Funktion—nationale Symbolkraft* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1998); Marco Dogo and Armando Pitassio, eds., *Città dei Balcani, città d'Europa. Studi sullo sviluppo urbano delle capitali post-ottomane, 1830–1923* (Lecce: Argo 2008).

283 Bernard Lory, *Le sort de l'héritage ottoman en Bulgarie. L'exemple des villes bulgares 1878–1900* (Istanbul: ISIS, 1985); Yorgos Koumaridis, "Urban Transformation and De-Ottomanisation in Greece," *East Central Europe / L'Europe du Centre-Est* 33, nos. 1–2 (2006): 213–241; Maximilian Hartmuth, "Negotiating Tradition and Ambition: Comparative Perspective on the 'De-Ottomanization' of the Balkan Cityscapes," *Ethnologia Balkanica* 10 (2006): 15–34, etc.

284 The Bosnian case is, in fact, more complex, given the fact that the Austro-Hungarian administration opted for an Orientalizing architectural style for the newly designed public buildings. More about the invention of these national styles in the other Balkan states appears in Ada Hajdu's contribution to this volume.

newly established borders (Tirana, Ankara), or even because the new capital would be centrally located after a hoped-for expansion of national territory (Sofia). Actually, the establishment of new capitals in the Balkans (something that did not occur in Anatolia before World War I) helped to create the impression of faster urban modernization in the former European Turkey compared to the rest of the Ottoman Empire.

Still, some established centers preserved their role. This is true primarily of Istanbul, which remained the biggest city in the region by far, but also of Thessaloniki and Izmir, which continue to be very important port and regional centers, surpassed in population only by the new capitals, Athens and Ankara, respectively. In parallel, there was a visible stagnation and even decline of cities located near the newly established land borders. The best example is Edirne, which was once one of the biggest cities in the region but which stagnated for most of the twentieth century. A comparison with Bursa is revealing in this regard. The two cities were of similar size until the nineteenth century, and both benefited from the prestige of being former capitals of the Ottoman state before the capture of Constantinople. By the year 2000, Bursa had more than one million inhabitants, while Edirne had only a tenth as many, slightly more than 100,000.

The urbanization process accelerated after World War II and was deeply influenced by the political systems in the respective countries. Therefore studies differentiate primarily between countries with communist regimes and a planned economy and those with a more or less free-market economy. Urban transformations in the socialist countries in the region are often presented separately, or together with other socialist countries in Eastern Europe, and this is also the case for the post-communist period.[285] In some cases the urbanization and regional processes in communist and non-communist countries in the region are studied in comparative perspective.[286] Thus the debates about cities and urban development in the region during the postwar period have almost nothing to do with the problematic related to the Balkan city, which is overshadowed by completely different questions.

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285 Jiří Musil, *Urbanization in Socialist Countries* (White Plains, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1980); Richard Antony French and F.E. Ian Hamilton, eds., *The Socialist City: Spatial Structure and Urban Policy* (Chichester: John Wiley, 1979); *Cities after Socialism: Urban and Regional Change and Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies*, eds. G. Andrusz, M. Harloe, and I. Szelenyi (Oxford, United Kingdom, and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996), etc.

286 Wilfried Heller, *Regionale Disparitaten und Urbanisierung in Griechenland und Rumanien* (Gottingen: Goltze, 1979).

At the same time, in many regards the Ottoman legacy could be still discerned independently of the newly established political borders and the political conditions in the respective states. At first glance the Ottoman urban legacy is most clearly visible in cities where de-Ottomanization was not pushed to the limit—in some smaller towns as well as in the old parts of a few larger cities. In these cases even a few buildings have symbolic value. But the traces of deliberate de-Ottomanization are equally important—most cities in the former Ottoman provinces have a very limited pre-nineteenth-century urban legacy. The distinctive features of the post-Ottoman space could also be seen from other criteria. In principle, a higher percentage of urban population is regarded as a sign of more advanced economic and social development. In Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Albania, more developed regions are also more urbanized, but this is not always the case in Romania and the former Yugoslavia, the two countries that include territories from the former Habsburg Empire. Data from the last census in Yugoslavia (1991) actually show a low level of urbanization in some less-developed parts of the federation. Least urbanized was Bosnia and Herzegovina (39.6 percent). The urbanization level in Serbia as a whole was 50.8 percent, which ranged from 55.7 percent in the more developed autonomous region of Vojvodina, and 53.65 percent in Serbia proper, to 37.7 percent in Kosovo (the lowest level in the former federation).[287] The rest of the results might seem surprising: among the individual republics, the fastest growth and the highest proportion of urban population is recorded in the less developed republics of Montenegro (58.2 percent while it was only 8.3 percent in 1948) and Macedonia (58.1 percent), while the proportion was lower in Slovenia, the most developed part of the federation (50.5 percent), as well as in Croatia (54.3 percent).[288] The same paradox appears in an interregional comparison of urbanization trends in Romania: by the end of the communist period, Dobrudja had the highest percentage of urban population

287 *United Nations: Demographic Yearbook 1996*, 48th ed. (New York: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1998), 173–175; *Yugoslav Survey* 37, no. 1 (1996): 7; Jakov Sirotković, *Ekonomski razvoj Jugoslavije—od prosperiteta do krize* (Zagreb: Narodne novine, 1990), 234. Slightly different data appear in *United Nations: World Urbanization Prospects; The 1994 Revision* (New York: United Nations, Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, Population Division, 1995), 76 and 82–83.

288 *Demografskiot razvoj i negovoto vlijanie vrz opshtestveno-ekonomskiot razvoj vo SR Makedonija*, ed. Elka Dimitrieva (Skopje: Ekonomski institut, 1990), 165; Sirotković, *Ekonomski razvoj Jugoslavije*, 224 and 231.

(67 percent), while in Transylvania the percentage was much lower.[289] Despite the rapid urban growth, such regions continued to lag behind in technical and social infrastructure, and thus in quality of urban life.

As a whole, in the post-Ottoman space the growth of urban population was faster than in the former Habsburg provinces. Like most less-developed countries, the urbanization in the post-Ottoman space developed primarily through massive rural-urban migration and the fast growth of big cities. By contrast, in Slovenia, for instance, the urbanization process was much more decentralized, and a considerable part of the non-rural population lived in villages. Concerning urban and regional processes, the border between the post-Ottoman and post-Habsburg space remains visible in disparities among former Yugoslav republics, as well as within Romania.

In addition, the Ottoman territories featured a relatively dense network of administrative centers (centers of *kaza*, juridical districts that also became administrative districts with the nineteenth-century reforms), which are usually treated as towns. As a consequence, statistics show a relatively high level of urbanization, while at the same time, much of the "urban" population was employed in agriculture.[290] This problem is aptly illustrated by the situation in Northern Dobrudja after 1878: there were seven localities formally recognized as urban communities in each of the two counties in the region (Constanţa and Tulcea), while in the rest of the kingdom, only the county of Prahova (Ploieşti) had as many cities.[291] At the same time, all the "cities" in the Romanian part of Dobrudja were very small, and their technical and social infrastructure lagged behind that of the cities in Romania's Old Kingdom. The final result is a relatively dense network of settlements formally recognized as urban (which artificially increases the proportion of urban population in official statistics), while rural-urban migration is directed mostly towards big cities that have more pronounced urban characteristics and offer real advantages in terms of quality of life.

Despite the development of the railway network and more generally of overland transport, the nineteenth-century trend for faster development of port cities has continued to the present day. Only one capital in the region is a

289 Dobrudja had the largest proportion of urban population in Romania for the whole post-World War II period: Vladimir Trebici and Ilie Hristache, *Demografia teritorială a României* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RSR, 1986), 29.

290 The same is valid for earlier periods: Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 216.

291 *Buletin statistic general al României (1892)* (Bucharest: Ministerul Agriculturi şi Domeniilor, 1893), 69 and 71.

port city—Athens (and only if Piraeus is included)—so this trend is visible when comparing the growth of the other big cities in the settlement hierarchy. In Romania the phenomenon is clearly visible in the case of Constanţa, which was transformed into a key port after the mid-nineteenth century, both for international traffic and on the national level after 1878. As a result, the previously small town of Köstence/Constanţa became one of the largest provincial centers in the country. Varna and Burgas, the main port cities for Northern and Southern Bulgaria, respectively, grew in a similar, though less spectacular way. In Albania the fastest-growing port cities are Durrës and Vlora; Durrës has traditionally been the country's second-largest city, and Vlora recently became the third-largest. The second- and third-largest cities in Croatia—Split and Rijeka—are also port cities. Water transport had a crucial role in redirecting urban growth in Greece—the largest cities in the country are on the sea, with the exception of Larissa and Ioannina; coastal areas (including some of the islands) are more developed than the interior, thanks to tourism and cheaper transport. In Turkey, Izmir remained the third-largest city after Istanbul and the capital, Ankara; on the whole, coastal regions in Turkey are more developed, and the "periphery" in terms of economic and social development consists largely of territories in the interior of Anatolia, especially in the east and southeast. Following a relatively short boom, after the late nineteenth century the Lower Danube lost its importance as a transportation route and consequently also as a factor for the faster modernization and growth of its port cities, many of which simply declined. At present the largest port cities on the Danube are capital cities (Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, and Belgrade), and therefore it would be difficult to determine the impact of this otherwise large river on their growth.

Questions related to what some scholars called the "Balkan city" regained a certain relevance due to the growing interest in urban heritage, including that from the Ottoman period. Certainly this was the case in varying degrees for individual countries in the region—in many cases the medieval heritage also received special attention (Veliko Tărnovo, Skopje), while in other cases the remnants from ancient times were put at the forefront (especially in Greece, but partly in Sofia, Plovdiv, etc.). Many port cities in the Balkans have an "Italian" heritage, especially in Dalmatia, where some cities never experienced direct Ottoman rule (Split, Zadar) or experienced it only for short periods (Kotor). The latter is also valid for parts of the Peloponnese (Nafplio, Monemvasia), as well as some of the islands (Rhodes, Crete, Corfu). With few exceptions this heritage was better preserved, and that makes it even more visible. Relatively little has remained from the Ottoman presence. The Ottoman legacy was rediscovered in smaller towns that preserved their traditional

appearance (Berat and Gjirokastër in Albania, Koprivshtitsa and Kalofer in Bulgaria, etc.) or in specific zones in larger cities (the market areas in Sarajevo, Skopje, and Ioannina; "the old town of Plovdiv").

Still, in a number of cases the positive re-evaluation of the local urban traditions consciously brought to the forefront the urban heritage from the Ottoman period. The process developed in a different way in the individual countries and also depended on the attitude towards the Ottoman Empire and its heritage in every one of them. It is understandable that direct references to the Ottoman urban tradition are most visible in present-day Turkey and, to a certain extent, in Bosnia. Certainly the emphasis even in these cases is different: concerning Bosnian cities, local authors refer to Islamic, Oriental, and Ottoman but not to "Turkish" urban culture. The legacy from the Ottoman period might be recognized as an echo of the medieval (Byzantine, Slavic, etc.) civilization—in Greece there is an institution in charge of preserving "Byzantine and post-Byzantine monuments."[292] In most other cases the positive re-evaluation of the Ottoman urban heritage is related to a recognition of the Ottoman city as the "traditional" city before Europeanization and modernization (meaning that these were somehow "our cities" before being influenced by the West), which, in addition, inherited at least some characteristics of the pre-Ottoman medieval city. In fact, the very concept of the "Balkan city" is part of this effort to convert the Ottoman urban civilization into an element of one's own cultural heritage.

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As this case study shows, Balkan studies, with the decisive contribution of the national historiographies in the region, developed its own interpretation of the urban history of the region during the Ottoman period. The cities in the Ottoman Balkans are presented as substantially different from the cities in the rest of the Empire, from "Islamic" and "Oriental" cities. Balkan cities have a long and rich history starting in ancient times and continuing in the Byzantino-Slavic Middle Ages; at a later stage they were subjected to important Oriental influences but modernized according to the European pattern in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This interpretation is questionable in both spatial and chronological terms. First of all, the concept of the Balkan city deals with only one of the urban types in the region; it analyzes the diversity of the Ottoman urban life in the Balkans but does not deal with the other urban cultures in the region. More

292 http://www.ekbmm.gr/english.php, accessed October 6, 2013.

importantly, this approach pays tribute to the imaginary border that "separates" Europe from Asia, as well as separating the Balkans from Anatolia and the Middle East. The problem is that even if this border is "purely conventional" and even if it is accepted "for practical purposes," it leads to a substantially distorted image of the past. Even a glimpse at the cities in the neighboring "non-European" provinces obliges us to re-examine the concept of the "Balkan city."

In chronological terms the historiographical concept of the "Balkan city" is too narrowly focused on the Ottoman period, which is certainly the most problematic period for presenting the history of the Balkans as an integral part of European history. In the end, the ambition was to prove that the "Ottoman city in the Balkans" was in fact the "Balkan city under the Ottomans." Through the prism of this ambition, scholars reinterpreted the Byzantine urban heritage and, more generally, the medieval urban heritage, as well as the modernization process from the nineteenth century onwards. Just as Balkan studies is interested primarily in the history of the region during the Ottoman and the immediate post-Ottoman period, the concept of the "Balkan city" is relevant for the same Ottoman period and partly also for the heritage it left. Although this study took an interest in the spatial boundaries of the region, the question of the temporal boundaries turned out to be of crucial importance as well.

This overview of the urban history of the region demonstrates that the realia and phenomena considered essentially "Balkan" are in fact "Ottoman" and "Oriental" and largely "Turkish" and "Islamic," while their Byzantino-Slavic basis is usually overestimated and might even be fictional. This is even more true when it comes to discovering the roots of Balkanness in ancient Thrace, Illyria, and so on. In fact, this preoccupation with the pre-Ottoman legacy is part of the ambition to emancipate the Balkans and the Balkan culture from the "Orient" and its influences.

The above historiographical overview of the "Balkan city" was interested not in the urban history of the region per se but in the conflicting interpretations of it. In the end, it must be recognized that analysis of the "Balkan city" reveals more about the discipline of Balkan studies (especially from the 1960s to the 1980s) than about the cities in the region. Still, the historiographical analysis supports one "Constantinople-centric" vision of the Balkans, and in this case the region likewise includes Anatolia. At the same time, the domination and the impact of Constantinople was not evenly spread over the whole territory covered by Balkan/Southeast European studies. Obviously, a number of cities in the northwest of the "peninsula" under Venetian and Habsburg domination were in the orbit of a completely different urban culture.

The "Balkan city" had its counterpart in Anatolia and, to a certain extent, in the Middle East. Precisely from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, the

period about which the "Balkan city" concept was elaborated, all these cities were included in the same state, the Ottoman Empire, and thus they developed for centuries under the same legal and political conditions and had similar institutions. They also shared a similar pre-Ottoman heritage and together entered the modernization and Europeanization processes during the nineteenth century. Most of the cities in the Balkans had similar traits and were part of the same urban network as cities in northwestern Anatolia, and all gravitated around Constantinople/Istanbul. This certainly provides insight into the human geography of the region in general. Of course, the analysis of other "Balkan" realia would give us a wider range of results; it would bring additional clarifications and corrections and could thus make the picture more precise.[293]

Concerning the diversity within the Ottoman territories, the port cities were the most different from the others, due to their much easier commercial exchange with the outside world, the presence of communities of foreigners, and foreign political domination in some of the cities. Of course, the Mediterranean of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries differed from the world described by Fernand Braudel. Although it certainly bore the heritage of previous eras, it was dominated by great naval powers at the time of steam navigation and occupied only a peripheral place in their global plans. The Black Sea region (although often discussed in recent years) does not appear to have had an impact on its coastal cities in the way the Adriatic did. And again, the most important of the port cities is the imperial capital, Constantinople.

This essay has underlined that modern states had a considerable impact on urban development. At the same time, national states also influenced the way urban history is written. It is usually written in a national framework, including for periods when the respective national state did not exist. The above study has focused on the "Balkan city," but the historiographies in the region wrote far more about the "Albanian," "Bosnian," "Bulgarian," and other cities than about the "Balkan cities." Such categorization of cities according to national criteria is problematic with regard to their individual characteristics, downplays all other factors in their development, and (concerning the distant past) is anachronistic. National historiographies have their own way of interpreting some general trends, like the modernization and Europeanization of the cities, which started before the secession of some Balkan states from the Ottoman Empire.

293 See Tchavdar Marinov's contribution on vernacular houses in the present volume, which presents a similar picture concerning spatial distribution. Of course, it must be taken into account that the two problems not only are interrelated but were studied in close connection.

Thus the analysis of the concept of the "Balkan city" once again pointed up the discord among the individual national schools dealing with "Balkan studies." The term "Balkan city" is widely used in Bulgarian historiography, but in different ways by different scholars. In other Balkan historiographies, the same designation most often means nothing more than spatial localization ("city/-ies in the Balkans"), and in some cases it is used in a completely different way, as a synonym or regional variation of the "Oriental" and "Islamic" city, not as its alternative. In such cases, even when the studies on the "Balkan city" are quoted, the concept in question is not adopted. At the same time, most works present urban history in a national framework, only rarely referring to the Balkan context. Works on urban history demonstrate once again that the academic studies on the Balkans are no less "Balkanized" than the region itself.

Concerning this point, I discussed the spatial scope of the region through the prism of one of the most static elements of human geography—the urban network. Of course, transformations were also addressed—changes beyond recognition in the city morphology and appearance, as well as restructuring of the urban network and hierarchy, especially during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Now I will turn to a completely different approach: to analyze the Balkan space not by focusing on fixed points (the individual cities in the region) but by examining how connections between the most important centers in the region, as well as with the outside world, grew faster and easier. I will focus on postal services, which in turn depended on all other means of transport and communication. In this way, instead of discussing the boundaries of the region, I will try to determine its place in a larger perspective by examining how this area connected to neighboring ones. In fact, the two approaches complement each other. One of the conclusions concerning urban modernization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was that, thanks to easier and cheaper transport, port cities changed faster than most other cities. An analysis focused on communications would allow us not only to better understand the reasons for why certain cities developed faster than others but also to learn more about the dynamics in the seemingly unchanging geography of the region.

3 The Balkans Through the Prism of Postal Geography

Studies on transport connections in the Balkans usually stress that they were difficult, and that appears very clearly in comparisons with Western and Central Europe. Bad roads are a recurrent topic in Balkan literature (for example, in Ivo Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle* [*Travnička hronika*]), as well as in the

historiography about the region and the individual countries in the region.[294] General overviews usually emphasize that, due to the mountainous terrain, transport connections were more difficult in the Western Balkans.[295]

Some of the existing studies on this topic concentrate on the major routes crossing the Balkans. The most important of these date back to Roman times, such as the Via Diagonalis (also known as the Via Militaris) and the Via Egnatia, the Danube, and so on.[296] Studies on trade and commercial history inevitably also discussed problems related to routes and transportation. Though detailed and thorough studies on these questions have been made, geographical and historical studies usually feature maps and/or lists of the roads in the region that present only a static picture. In most cases they do not discuss how long the different itineraries took, how often they were used, how their role changed in different eras, and so on.[297]

Another related and much-better-studied topic is the construction of the railways.[298] It received much more attention because of the railways' importance not only for commerce but also for political history—the construction of the main railway lines took place only after long diplomatic negotiations between the countries involved and depended on political choices and pressures. Studies on railway construction invite one to think about the dynamics of the problem—the routes are not something (pre)existing; they need to be constructed and maintained.

The historical and geographical studies that address these problems concentrate mainly on travel and commercial routes within the region, while

294 Roumen Daskalov, *Bălgarskoto obshtestvo*, vol. 2, *Naselenie, obshtestvo i kultura* (Sofia: Gutenberg, 2005), 197 ff.

295 Hösch, *The Balkans*, 15–17; Oliver-Jens Schmitt, "Verkehr und Handel," in *Geschichte Südosteuropas*, eds. Clewing and Schmitt, 206–207.

296 Konstantin Jireček, *Die Heerstrasse von Belgrad nach Konstantinopel und die Balkanpässe* (Prague: F. Tempsky, 1877); Ivan Shishmanov, "Stari pătuvaniya prez Bălgariya v posoka na rimskiya voenen păt ot Belgrad za Tsarigrad," *Sbornik za narodni umotvoreniya, nauka i knizhninna* 4 (1891): 320–448; Olga Zirojević, "Zur historischen Topographie der Heerstrasse nach Konstantinopel zur Zeit der osmanischen Herrschaft," *Etudes Balkaniques* 23, no. 1 (1987): 81–106 and no. 2 (1987): 46–64; Elizabeth Zachariadou, ed., *Via Egnatia under Ottoman Rule (1380–1699)* (Rethymnon: Crete University Press, 1996), etc.

297 E.g., Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300–1600* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 122–123; Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, 20.

298 Vahdettin Engin, *Rumeli Demiryolları* (Istanbul: Eren, 1993); Basil C. Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia, 1870–1912: Socio-Economic Change and the Railway Factor* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1993); Angel Dzonev, *Makedoniya v zhelezopătnata politika na Bălgariya (1878–1918)* (Kyustendil: RIM "Akad. Yordan Ivanov," 2008), etc.

connections to the outside world are not usually considered. This approach is problematic in itself but is particularly true of the Balkans, for as Mark Mazower rightly noted: "Communication is often easier with areas outside the peninsula than between its component parts so that Dubrovnik, for instance, has had closer ties for much of its history with Venice than with Belgrade."[299] This paradox brings into question the very perception of the Balkans as one region (in the sense of an area with relatively intensive internal connections) and deserves attention on its own. In any case, the study of the connections with the outside world would also give us a clearer idea of the place of the Balkans in a larger perspective vis-à-vis Europe, Asia, and the Mediterranean. For these reasons, I will try to pay more attention here to the connections between different major centers in the region with the outside world.

Above all, I will examine the practical dimensions of postal delivery between the Balkans and Western and Central Europe. As already mentioned, despite formally belonging to Europe, the present-day Balkans were not always closely related to it and in many regards had more in common with the Near East. Historiographical schools in the region tend to overestimate the advantages that the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire had in contacts with the Western world—not only because they are perceived as an integral part of the European continent but also because, in practical terms, they were closer to Central and Western Europe and were more directly exposed to their influence. This argument appears often in studies on nineteenth- and twentieth-century history, especially in regard to the processes of Europeanization and modernization at that time. As was already demonstrated, the urban history of the region largely disproves such speculations.

By analyzing the postal connections, I will try to demonstrate that the picture was even more complex and that it changed over time. This purely technical problem will demonstrate whether and to what extent the Balkan lands had an advantage in their connections with the Western world, how these connections functioned, and how they changed over time. In contrast to the widely used cliché that the main roads were "known since antiquity," here I will stress the abrupt changes due to the adoption of new means of transport. I will pay special attention to the "shortening" of the postal routes to the outside world in times of rapid technological modernization. The issue is that in practice, the time needed to send a letter from one place to another depends not only on the distance on the map, but also on the speed, the regularity, and the security of the connections on the route. New means of transport and better organization led to substantial improvements, and it is for a good reason that

299 Mazower, *The Balkans*, 19.

postal authorities—not only the Ottoman ones but also those of the European countries—calculated the length of the individual postal courses not in kilometers, which usually remained unchanged, but in the time needed to take the distance—in days, hours, and even minutes. At the same time, the introduction of new means of transport often led to new itineraries being chosen; the whole process of constructing and maintaining the new infrastructure depended greatly on political factors.

In the course of research, I found one period of about a century particularly interesting. It stretched from the 1830s, when steamships started to travel to the big ports in the region, until the end of the 1930s, which saw the completion of the Baghdad railway, the last main railway line connecting the Balkans with the outside world. This period also includes the advent of the telegraph in the Ottoman Empire (starting from the mid-1850s), which had a great impact on the functioning of the administration and the flow of information coming from the outside world (later the telephone played a similar role, but it will not be discussed here). During the interwar period airmail was introduced and became more widely used, which makes largely pointless the detailed study of surface mail concerning rapid postal delivery. Airmail made possible postal connections over long distances without the need to construct infrastructure along the whole route, but the use of such connections depended on profitability and/or political will.

In works on Balkan history, the problems related to routes and transportation are examined mostly with regard to the development of commerce. The topic is important not only for economic history but also for understanding the foreign interventions and influences, and more generally the connections with the outside world. Unfortunately, the technical questions related to transportation receive only limited attention in such studies. Concerning postal delivery, the main goal is not transportation of large quantities of mail at a reasonable price but rapid and regular service. As a result the itineraries do not always coincide, and thus a study of postal routes adds another dimension to the knowledge provided by studies on commercial routes.

The starting point of the analysis is one particular case: the postal connections between Sofia and Western Europe in the last years of Ottoman rule—just before Sofia became the capital of the new Principality of Bulgaria and some ten years before the Orient Express started to pass through it. In the beginning I will concentrate on the reports sent by the French vice-consul in Sofia, Leandre Le Gay, between June 1875 and August 1877. Then I will look for a larger perspective in other sources, including unpublished documents from the Austrian and especially the British archives concerning the postal services. Both are important, because the Austrian post was the only foreign post

carrying mail overland through the Ottoman Balkans, while the British had to keep an eye on the various possibilities for postal connections through the whole of Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Near East; London was a good point of observation concerning long-distance postal routes. That will make it possible to address the major questions related to the postal connections between the Balkans and Western Europe during the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The French Vice-Consul in Sofia, Leandre Le Gay, and His Complaints About the Postal Services in the Town (1875–1877)

Leandre Le Gay (1833–1887) is well known in Sofia—as early as 1879, a street in the city center was named after him. Vice-consul for two years, he was the first French diplomat permanently stationed in Sofia. Completely unknown in his own country, Le Gay is one of the foreign diplomats who enjoy lasting popularity in Bulgaria because of his pro-Bulgarian stance. In his reports from Sofia, Le Gay is also critical of the Ottoman Empire as a whole, of the local authorities in Sofia, and of the Turks and the Muslims in general. It is understandable that Le Gay's diplomatic reports attracted the interest of Bulgarian historians. They were quoted in various studies as evidence of the Bulgarians' tragic fate in the last years of Ottoman rule, especially during the 1876 uprising. In time they were translated and published in full.[300] It is interesting to note that after the war, Le Gay was appointed vice-consul in Burgas (Eastern Rumelia), and in his first report on February 3, 1879, he was equally critical of the newly established Bulgarian administration.[301] Not surprisingly, Le Gay's reports from Burgas have not been published in Bulgarian.

Actually, Leandre Le Gay's reports from Sofia also provide other information, especially about the foreign nationals who then resided in the town. But especially useful for this study are the numerous remarks about the postal and telegraph service in Sofia—certainly more than one usually finds in such sources. These remarks are related to the French vice-consul's critical attitude towards

300 Leandre Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia, 1875–1877*, eds. Krumka Sharova et al. (Sofia: Sv. Kliment Ohridski, 1997). Footnotes here refer to the published translation, after comparing it with the originals in the Archives du Ministère des affaires étrangères (AMAE): Correspondance politique des consuls (CPC), Turquie, Sofia, 1 (f. 1–209) and Correspondance consulaire et commerciale (CCC), Sofia, 1 (f. 1–71).

301 AMAE, CCC, Bourgas, v.1, f. 1 v : "... par suite de l'inexpérience des nouveaux fonctionnaires unie à une incapacité notoire et à une honnêteté douteuse, l'administration bulgare qui fonctionne sous les auspices de l'armée russe laisse, autant si non plus à désirer que celle des Turcs."

the Ottoman authorities, but they testify to much more than his dissatisfaction. On several occasions Le Gay gives detailed information about the regularity, confidentiality, and prices of the postal and telegraph services, as well as about the very possibility to communicate with the outside world. The analysis of this information would, at the same time, be an attempt at an alternative reading of a source already known and used in traditional historiography.

Le Gay writes that the Ottoman post provided a postal connection between Sofia and the capital, Constantinople, twice a week; with Rustchuk/Ruse, the center of the vilayet, to which Sofia was subordinated until June 1876, there was a weekly connection. According to the vice-consul, the prices were relatively high. The cost was based on the weight of the letter and the distance in hours of travel: for a letter of 10 grams on a distance of up to 100 hours, the price was one-and-a-half kuruş;[302] up to 200 hours was three kuruş; and so on. The customer had to pay for the whole distance, even if the letter was needlessly transported via a longer route; the price doubled for registered mail. According to an international treaty, starting January 1, 1876, the service was supposed to be free of charge for foreign diplomats, but even after this date, Le Gay continued to pay for his letters.[303] All these payments created a significant financial burden. According to Le Gay's data, his postal expenses amounted to 408.80 French francs for 1875, almost 10 percent of his total expenses for that year (4,456.76 francs). This was more than the rent of the vice-consulate building, which for the same period was 276 francs.[304]

The confidentiality of the correspondence was another delicate problem. The authorities read private letters in at least some cases, as is revealed by a report that a letter criticizing the governor of Sofia, Mazhar Pasha, was confiscated by the Ottoman post.[305] Actually, as other sources make clear, in order to avoid this political control, some Bulgarians received their correspondence in care of the French vice-consul.[306]

In these troubled years, the Ottoman authorities used their control over the postal service to keep certain unpleasant news from the general public. However, the public still learned it later on, very often due—again—to the postal service. For instance, when Mazhar Pasha kept silent about the murder

302 4.6 kuruş (which foreigners also called "piastres") = 1 French franc.

303 Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia*, 51.

304 Ibid., 54.

305 Ibid., 217.

306 Such as the teacher Michail Bubotinov: Kirila Vazvazova-Karateodorova and Lidiya Dragolova, eds., *Sofia prez Vazrazhdaneto. Sbornik materiali* (Sofia: Narodna prosveta, 1988), 148.

of two vice-consuls in Salonica on May 6, 1876—a crime that became notorious at the time—the news first reached Sofia in a letter received on May 12 by a local merchant and spread through word of mouth. This information was confirmed on the following day, May 13, when the post brought the May 8 issue of *Courrier d'Orient*.[307] Similarly, when the Russian army captured the town of Nikopol on July 16, 1877, the inhabitants of Sofia learned of it only on July 31 from European newspapers brought to the town.[308]

The vice-consul states that the only foreign postal service in the town was the Austrian one. The postal connection between Vienna and Constantinople passed through Sofia twice a week in both directions; once a week this post provided a connection with Ruse and Salonica.[309] The Austrian post had much more limited sphere of activity than the Ottoman one, because foreign postal services were allowed to accept only mail going abroad. In charge of the Austrian postal service was the vice-consul Georg Luterotti. Apparently this was his main job, because after the war he continued to manage the postal service, while another official assumed the diplomatic representation of the Habsburg Empire in the new capital. The vice-consulate was established in 1851 and remained the only consular representative in the town until the mid-1870s.[310] Le Gay mentions that the Austrian vice-consul was kind enough also to accept from him letters destined for the interior of the Ottoman Empire. On one occasion Le Gay reports that he used the services of the Austrian post in his connections with Paris—in early April 1877, in order to send a parcel to the Directorate of Commercial and Consular Affairs.[311]

The vice-consul was privileged to have access to one more option to send and receive mail—the communications channels of the Ottoman authorities. Le Gay speaks of the "private post of the governor," which the vice-consul could use to send mail to Ruse; mail in this direction was sent twice a week in the summer and once a week in the winter. This service was free of charge for the vice-consul, but he had doubts that the confidentiality of his correspondence would be respected.[312]

On February 21, 1877, Le Gay reported on the forthcoming opening of an office of the International Post in Sofia, which, it was expected, would serve the city twice a week. According to the vice-consul, that development did not

307 Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia*, 64.

308 Ibid., 245.

309 Ibid., 51 and 64.

310 AMAE, Mémoires et documents, Turquie, v. 61, f. 328 and 342.

311 Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia*, 224.

312 Ibid., 50.

promise a dramatic improvement in service—this new postal service was based in the building of the Ottoman post, and it was run by Ottoman clerks. The next day, Le Gay made another criticism: the International Post's carriage left Constantinople at the same time as the Austrian post's carriage, yet it reached Sofia six hours after the Austrians did. In order to collect their mail on this, the very first day of the International Post's operation, customers had to wait for an additional hour-and-a-half, because the clerks were on a meal break.[313]

The telegraph plays a peculiar role in the consul's reports. He mentions it often, yet because of the cost, he used it only in the most urgent cases. A telegram to Ruse cost him an average of ten-and-a-quarter kuruş, while a letter cost one-and-a-half kuruş.[314] Thus it is understandable why, on one occasion, Le Gay sent a letter in order to answer a pressing telegram from the French ambassador in Vienna, although his senior colleague's question regarded the malfunctioning of the postal service itself, and sending the answer by mail was of limited help.[315] As already demonstrated, despite such economizing, the vice-consul paid a considerable amount for postal services.

Le Gay's reports give plenty of examples of the telegraph's considerable role in connecting the provincial town of Sofia with the Ottoman capital. For instance, a letter expressing the population's gratitude to the governor Mazhar Pasha (a letter demanded by the governor himself) was sent in May 1876 as a telegram to Constantinople.[316] Mazhar Pasha used the same tactic upon learning that he was being removed from his position: city notables sent three telegrams expressing their gratitude to the governor for his efforts and demanding that he remain in office.[317] When, at the demand of the Ottoman government, the exarch of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church summoned the metropolitan of Sofia to the capital, he did so by telegraph (December 10, 1876).[318] As in most cities in the Ottoman Empire, in Sofia people learned by telegraph about the consecutive ascension of the two new sultans: Murad V on May 30 and Abdulhamid II on August 31, 1876.[319] In the same way, the news arrived in Sofia

313 Ibid., 204–205.
314 Ibid., 50–51.
315 Ibid., 68.
316 Ibid., 86.
317 Ibid., 216.
318 Ibid., 184.
319 Ibid., 72.

on December 24, 1876, that on the previous day, the sultan had promulgated a constitution.[320]

More importantly, according to Le Gay, the governor of Sofia, Mazhar Pasha, used to spend a couple of hours every evening in the telegraph office.[321] In some cases he was accompanied by other high officials visiting Sofia.[322] Several other remarks testify that the telegraph was not only a usual but an indispensable means for the functioning of the Ottoman civil and military administration in Sofia. According to Le Gay, the telegraph had a "European office" with two clerks.[323]

Supplementary information about the postal and telegraph connections notes the vice-consul's complaints in times of trouble, when their usual operation was interrupted. The crisis provoked by the Bulgarian uprising in Northern Thrace in the spring of 1876 appears to be the most important obstacle to postal connections during Le Gay's service in Sofia. The vice-consul sent a series of seemingly repetitive reports on this issue. The revolt broke out in the small town of Koprivshtitsa / Avret Alan (located some 110 kilometers east of Sofia) on May 2 (April 20, according to the locally used Julian calendar), but Le Gay learned about it on the fifth of the same month, that is, on the fourth day, thanks to the repair of the telegraph wires, which had been cut by the insurgents. By contrast, the postal carriages, both the Ottoman and the Austrian one, that were expected to arrive in the morning of May 4 from Tatarpazarcik/ Pazardzhik had not reached Sofia yet.[324] Actually, the telegraph lines were cut and reconnected a couple of times.[325] Later on, Le Gay insisted that the lines were cut by the irregular army (the then-notorious *başıbozuk*), while the authorities accused the Christian insurgents.[326] In any case, at the time of the insurgence, both sides of the conflict were aware of the crucial role of the telegraph and the rapid transmission of information in an armed conflict.

The interruption of postal services lasted for much longer. Six days later, on May 11, not a single postal carriage had arrived. At the same time, the carriages of the Ottoman post leaving Sofia in the direction of Constantinople were not able to reach the railway station in Pazardzhik; the Austrian postal carriage

320 Ibid., 194, 196.

321 Ibid., 75. The published translation erroneously renders the text as "this evening" instead of "every evening." Cf. AMAE, CCC, Sofia, 1, f. 34.

322 Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia*, 109.

323 Ibid., 242.

324 Ibid., 59.

325 Ibid., 61.

326 Ibid., 99.

that was supposed to leave Sofia on May 5 was still in the town. Hence the Austrian postal authorities decided to pursue an alternative route: their agent was ordered to send back to Niš all the pieces of mail bound for Constantinople in order to transport them to their final destination through the Danube.[327] As subsequent reports reveal, this route was used for almost three weeks.[328] In this situation Le Gay sent his reports to the French consul in Ruse instead of sending them directly to the Ottoman capital; for this he relied not only on the post but also on European subjects traveling in this direction.[329]

The reestablishment of normal postal connections took three more weeks. On May 24 Le Gay stated that it was already possible to travel freely from Sofia to Pazardzhik.[330] Still another report written the same day shows that the postal connections were not yet functioning. According to the vice-consul, in the previous twenty days, all the carriages of the Ottoman post were sent toward Constantinople, but only two (apparently out of six or seven for this period) reached the capital. Two of the carriages of the Austrian post that were expected in Sofia had still not arrived.[331] It seems that at least the connection with Salonica was functioning.[332] On June 2—exactly a month after the uprising broke out—the vice-consul mentions for the first time that the Austrian post had resumed service.[333] Concerning the Ottoman post, the mail sent on May 25 from Constantinople arrived via Salonica only on June 7. In this case, for the first time after the beginning of the crisis, the Ottoman post also brought newspapers, albeit old issues. Also on June 7, it was announced that the Austrian and the Ottoman post from Constantinople were expected to arrive the following day, and the postal carriage from Vienna was expected the day after that.[334] Le Gay's report of June 9 confirms that on June 8, shortly before sunset, the carriages of the two posts arrived in Sofia with mail from Constantinople. On June 14 Le Gay confirmed that the Austrian and the Ottoman post were already working as usual, but the carriages from Constantinople arrived in Sofia several hours late, because they did not travel at night.[335]

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327 Ibid., 62. The published translation erroneously renders the text as "send to Ruse" instead of "returned to Niš." Cf. AMAE, CCC, Sofia, 1, f. 23.

328 Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia*, 68–69.

329 Ibid., 62.

330 Ibid., 70.

331 Ibid., 69.

332 Ibid., 64.

333 Ibid., 75.

334 Ibid., 77.

335 Ibid., 84. The published translation erroneously renders the text as "arrive in Constantinople" instead of "arrive from Constantinople." Cf. AMAE, CCC, Sofia, 1, f. 43.

In summary, the two-week-long uprising severed the normal connection between Sofia and the outside world for more than a month. Neither of the two alternative routes—via Salonica or via the Danube—offered a suitable alternative, and so the post had to wait until traffic could be re-established on the usual route. Actually, these events have already been analyzed in other studies of postal history,[336] and the French vice-consul's reports give additional information about the impact of this crisis in one neighboring provincial town.

One year later, the Russo-Turkish War (April 1877–March 1878) caused new troubles in the postal services. The Sofia-Ruse connection was the first to be jeopardized (in May 1877) by the advance of the Russian army.[337] Later, starting at the end of July 1877, the Ottoman post had to go via Salonica to reach Sofia. Without giving details, Le Gay mentioned that the Austrian post was not functioning regularly.[338] Use of the telegraph was further restricted for security reasons. On June 10, 1877, communication in foreign languages was forbidden, except for foreign diplomats, who were allowed to correspond in French, English, German, Italian, or Turkish with Latin letters in uncoded text.[339]

Perhaps surprisingly, in the meantime, during the Serbo-Turkish War (June–December 1876), Le Gay does not mention difficulties in his communication with the outside world, although the post obviously could not follow the usual route between Vienna and Constantinople via Belgrade and Sofia and had to rely on alternative routes. Le Gay never commented on this issue, probably because it was self-evident—all his correspondence with Paris and the outside world in general was transferred via Constantinople. Otherwise Le Gay would have vigorously complained about the irregular postal connections not in May 1876 but starting from the end of June of that year.

The Main Road Between Constantinople and Vienna

The case of Sofia is especially interesting in one regard—studies of this city often stress that it is located "on the main road between Europe and Asia," or at least between Constantinople and Vienna. Between Constantinople and Belgrade, this road almost coincides with a road from Roman times, which later became known as the Via Diagonalis and was sometimes called the Via Militaris. Within the Ottoman Empire, this road (called *Orta Kol*, "the middle

336 Andreas Patera, "Die Rolle der Habsburgmonarchie für den Postverkehr zwischen dem Balkan und dem übrigen Europa," in *Der Weg führt über Österreich . . . Zur Geschichte des Verkehrs- und Nachrichtenwesens von und nach Südosteuropa (18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart)*, ed. Harald Heppner (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), 57ff.

337 Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia*, 231, 232.

338 Ibid., 243.

339 Ibid., 238, 241.

arm") was one of the most important parts of the empire's road network. But as the story of the French vice-consul in Sofia demonstrated, in the 1870s this location provided only limited advantages in the connection with the outside world. To understand why, we need to take into account the specific functions of this road, as well as its condition at the time Le Gay stayed in Sofia. In his study of travelers in the early Ottoman Empire, Stefanos Yerasimos identified three main functions a road could have: 1) military, 2) commercial, and 3) rapid communication—for diplomatic missions, postal connections, etc.[340] In addition, when discussing the role of different roads during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the advent of new means of transport must be taken into account; it could completely change the role of the individual routes.

During the early era of Ottoman rule in the region, the road from Constantinople via Adrianople/Edirne, Philippopolis/Filibe/Plovdiv, Sofia, Niš, and Belgrade was of crucial military importance. The road was used by the sultan's armies in the military campaigns against Central Europe, and for that very reason, it was one of the best-maintained roads in the empire and could also be used by wheeled vehicles.[341] But as Yerasimos noted, the road's quality was not consistent. Generally it improved the closer one got to Constantinople, but in certain parts—for example, between Sofia and Niš—it was in deplorable condition.[342] In the mid-nineteenth century Ami Boué commented that, contrary to expectations, only some parts of the Belgrade-Constantinople road could be used with a carriage ("*en voiture*"); in some parts, such as the Niš-Pirot-Sofia-Ihtiman segment, one could travel with carts ("*en charrettes*"), while two passes (one between Ihtiman and Tatarpazarcik/Pazardzhik and another between Hasköy/Haskovo and Harmanli) could be crossed by horse.[343]

The deteriorated condition of the Via Diagonalis during the late Ottoman period resulted not only from the lack of resources to maintain it but also from a shift in state priorities. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, the three cities that were used as the seat of the beylerbey of Rumelia were all located on this road—Edirne, Filibe, and Sofia. After the end of the big military campaigns in this direction against the Habsburgs, since the end of the

340 Stefanos Yerasimos, *Les voyageurs dans l'Empire ottoman* (*XIV^e–XVI^e siècles*), (Ankara: TTK, 1991), 91.

341 Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300–1600*, 146; Yerasimos, *Les voyageurs dans l'Empire ottoman*, 89.

342 Yerasimos, *Les voyageurs dans l'Empire ottoman*, 53.

343 Ami Boué, *Sur l'Établissement de bonnes Routes et surtout de Chemins de fer dans la Turquie d'Europe* (Vienna: Guillaume Braumüller, 1852), 2–3; cf. Jireček, *Die Heerstrasse von Belgrad nach Konstantinopel und die Balkanpässe*, 117.

eighteenth century the beylerbey of Rumelia more and more often resided in Manastır/Bitola, and the latter became the permanent center of this administrative unit in the 1830s.[344] Apparently, the location of the new seat of the beylerbey was chosen in order to control from nearby the Western Balkans, and more precisely, the territories of present-day Albania and Epirus.[345] During the same period, because of the wars with Russia, some of the north-south roads in the Eastern Balkans became more important. Ami Boué writes that Sultan Mahmud II ordered the construction of two good, large roads crossing the Balkan mountain range: Karnobat-Şumnu/Shumen and Eski Zağra/Stara Zagora-Gabrovo (via the Shipka pass).[346]

One must also take into account the new possibilities provided by steamboating in the Mediterranean, as well as on the Danube, since the 1830s. As a result, in the following decades the commercial traffic between Sofia and the Ottoman capital took place not only by the land road via Plovdiv and Edirne but also via the port of Lom and then via the Danube and the Black Sea, or via Salonica and then by sea through the Aegean and the Sea of Marmara.[347] During the same period, that is, after the 1830s, the establishment of a custom house at Aleksinac became a supplementary obstacle for the commercial traffic by the land route via Niš and Belgrade; commerce with Central Europe more and more often relied on transportation on the Danube.[348]

Only after the mid-nineteenth century did the Via Diagonalis start to regain its importance. One of the first signs that the shortest overland route to Belgrade and Vienna had undeniable advantages was the establishment of a telegraph line to Central Europe on this route. The first telegraph lines in the Ottoman Empire were built for military purposes during the Crimean War—the first one crossed the Eastern Balkans and then continued towards Bucharest in order to establish a connection with the European telegraph network. Immediately afterwards a second telegraph line to Europe was constructed, and it followed

344 Michael Ursinus, *Regionale Reformen im Osmanischen Reich am Vorabend der Tanzimat: Reformen der rumelischen Provinzgouverneure im Gerichtssprengel von Manastir (Bitola) zur Zeit der Herrschaft Sultan Mahmuds II. (1808–39)* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1982), 138–139; Gergana Georgieva, "Za tsentăra na provintsiya Rumelia (ot kraya na XVIII vek do 1839 g.)," *Istorichesko bădeshte* 8, nos. 1–2 (2004): 47–70.

345 Michael Ursinus, *Regionale Reformen im Osmanischen Reich am Vorabend der Tanzimat* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1982), 138–139.

346 Boué, *Sur l'Établissement de bonnes Routes*, 4.

347 Konstantin Kosev, "Sotsialno-ikonomicheski predpostavki za natsionalno-osvovoboditelnoto dvizhenie v Sofia i sofiysko prez 60–te i 70–te godini na XIX vek," in *Sofia prez vekovete*. vol. 1, eds. Georgi Georgiev and Boris Mateev (Sofia: BAN, 1989), 209.

348 Kiel, "Urban Development in Bulgaria in the Turkish Period," 120.

the direct route between Constantinople and Europe via Plovdiv-Sofia-Niš-Belgrade.[349] Another, more important change was related to the general policy of road constructions in the empire, starting from the late 1850s and early 1860s. As governor of the eyalet of Niš (which at that time also included the sandjak of Sofia), Midhad Pasha had the respective section of the road to Constantinople built in 1861–1862. That created an opportunity to transport passengers on the postal carriages on the Niš-Constantinople line. After the (re)construction of the Niš-Sofia road, and then further road improvements in the direction of Constantinople in 1862 and 1863, ox carts were replaced with horse carts, which increased the speed of the postal connection.[350] In this case the Ottoman authorities were concerned with the connections between the provincial center and the imperial capital, but in any case the new road improved the speed and regularity of the postal connections with Central Europe as well. The next (and far more important) step in the revival of this route was the construction of a railway along the same path, but implementing this idea took more time, and by 1873 only the Constantinople-Edirne-Plovdiv-Pazardzhik section was completed.

On the whole, for most of the nineteenth century, the main land road between Vienna and Constantinople was of only limited importance militarily and commercially. It continued to be used by the postal services, but even for postal connections, the land route via Belgrade to Constantinople had limited advantages after the advent of steam navigation. The problems were related not so much to the time needed for the transfer of mail as to the unsecure postal connection, the various delays, and the poor service. The very fact that Vice-Consul Le Gay—who had served in 1870–1874 as a dragoman-adjunct in the vice-consulate in the Arabian port city of Jeddah[351]—complained so often indicates that postal services from Sofia were really problematic.

The road via Edirne, Sofia, and Belgrade was used by both the Ottoman and the Austrian authorities for diplomatic missions and correspondence. Later it was also used for generally accessible postal services available to ordinary subjects. The Austrian post was the only foreign post operating on this line, and its messengers used this route for centuries. According to the available sources, the Vienna-Constantinople route took eighteen days in the sixteenth century,

349 Roderic H. Davison, "The Advent of the Electric Telegraph in the Ottoman Empire," in *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774–1923: The Impact of the West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 136.

350 Nejat Göyünç, "Midhat Paşa'nın Niş Valiliği Hakkında Notlar ve Belgeler," *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 12 (1982): 289–290, 300.

351 Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia*, 27.

but in the best case the time could be reduced to ten or eleven days. In 1746 (at the time of Maria Theresa) a regular monthly postal connection was established, which took twenty days. The usual route followed the road via Belgrade. In some cases an alternative route through Wallachia and the Eastern Balkans was also used, but it took more time.[352] Cities on the Belgrade-Constantinople road also benefited from this postal line, although these cities did not have enough potential customers of the postal services. Gradually the time needed to take the distance was substantially reduced. Thus, for instance, according to data from 1861, mail took seven days from Vienna to Constantinople, and eight days in the opposite direction: the postal carriage left Vienna every Monday morning at 6:30 and arrived in Constantinople early in the morning the following Monday. In the opposite direction (Constantinople-Vienna) it left Wednesday evening and arrived Thursday evening of the following week.[353] In fact, the Austrians were running the only foreign postal service not only on the Via Diagonalis but in the whole Balkan interior, although the French postal services had a network in the major ports of the Eastern Mediterranean, and in the Black Sea they briefly had a service in Varna.

The Ottoman authorities had always maintained a well-functioning communication network for their own needs, but the postal services were open to the general public only after reforms began in 1841. In the case of the Ottoman post, the road to Belgrade was one of the main postal routes in the empire. Moreover, data from 1845 show that Edirne, Plovdiv, Sofia, and Niš were among the relatively few cities where a postal director was appointed—in all, there were thirteen in the Balkans and twenty-one in Anatolia.[354] But as became clear, even thirty years later the postal services in this relatively important provincial center were far from satisfactory, and that was due not only to technical backwardness but also to bad management.

The introduction of steam navigation also made the picture more complex concerning postal connections between Vienna and Constantinople. As we have seen, the Austrians preserved their overland connection through the Balkans but also organized other lines for the same purpose. A steamship service from Trieste to Constantinople was established in 1836, which also started to transport mail to and from the Ottoman capital; an important improvement in this case was the completion of the railway line from Vienna to Trieste in

352 Patera, "Die Rolle der Habsburgmonarchie für den Postverkehr," 37–44, 51.

353 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (ÖStA, HHStA), 3 F 49 Postwesen Staaten, 1852–1868, Levante (bis 1879), fol. 362.

354 Nesimi Yazıcı, "Tanzimat Döneminde Osmanlı Haberleşme Kurumu," in *150. Yılında Tanzimat*, ed. H.D. Yıldız (Ankara: TTK, 1992), 156.

1857. Another connection was provided by steamboats on the Danube. To avoid a longer navigation through the Danube Delta, a short section had to be crossed overland, and in the 1860s that was done by train (Boğazköy/Cernavodă-Köstence/Constanţa, completed in 1860, and later Rustchuk/Ruse-Varna, completed in 1866) and then to continue again by steamer to Constantinople. Data from 1865 to 1867 show that postal connections by water were somewhat faster: the journey by the Danube, railway, and steamer through the Black Sea took approximately five days, the route via Trieste and then only by sea took six-and-a-half days, and the overland connection via Belgrade and Sofia took seven, eight, or eight-and-a-half days. If the connection by the Danube was operating, the overland connection was used only for mail exchange between Vienna and the cities on the Belgrade-Sofia-Philipopolis/Filibe/Plovdiv-Edirne land route, as well as those on the Sofia-Serres-Salonica side connection.[355]

The development of postal services was closely related to the transportation of passengers—in general, postal carriages also used to take paying passengers. But the fast connection for mail was not always convenient enough, and to travel between the Ottoman Empire and Western and Central Europe before the construction of railway lines, most people preferred to go by water. A telling example of this is the itinerary of an Ottoman sultan's sole visit to Europe. In the summer of 1867, Sultan Abdulaziz left Constantinople by steamship to Marseille, and after visiting the big European capitals, he returned from Vienna by steamboat to Ruse. Then, with the new railway to Varna and again by steamship, he returned to the capital, Constantinople. These two options—by steamship on the Mediterranean or by steamboat on the Danube—were used by almost all travelers between the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe at that time.[356] Of course, when the starting point of the journey was a place in the interior, one first had to reach the nearest port.

Thus in the 1860s and 1870s, the Danube was already a faster and preferred option for travel between the Ottoman capital (and elsewhere in the Eastern Balkans) and Central Europe. Studies on urban history often emphasize that steamship navigation was an important factor in the urban development and rapid modernization of Danubian port cities in the second half of the nineteenth century. Still, transportation on the Danube was far more expensive than transportation by sea, and as Walther Rechberger concluded, this river

355 ÖStA, HHStA, 3 F 49 Postwesen Staaten, 1852–1868, Levante (bis 1879), fol. 46–47, 97, 253.
356 *Tuna/Dunav*, Nos. 158, 161, 164, 169, 187, 192 / 1867.

never became anything more than a "gigantic torrent."[357] First of all, the role of the river was very limited before the advent of steamboating: in the past, merchants used roads along the river more often than they used the river itself, and the piers on the Danube were most often used merely to cross to the opposite bank.[358] Austrian steamboats started to operate on the Danube in 1829, and German ones in 1835;[359] regular steamboating on the Lower Danube started in 1836. It must be noted that steamboating on the Danube was seasonal: it usually started in early April and ended in early November, or if the autumn happened to be warmer, in early December. Fast and regular connections between port cities on the Danube paused during the winter months.

Until the nineteenth century, there were also some natural obstacles on the course of the river, especially at the Iron Gates. The first corrective works date from 1834, but the full length of the Danube waterway was not regulated until 1896.[360] The construction of the Cernavodă-Constanţa railway, and especially the Ruse-Varna railway, shortened the travel time, but the transfer of mail and passengers from steamboat to the train and then again to a steamboat was time-consuming. Rudimentary port facilities caused additional difficulties: a modern harbor was constructed in Varna in 1906, and in Ruse in 1912.[361] All these improvements materialized only after the main railway lines in the region were completed. Contemporary observers noted the paradox that, although the Danube waterway had been substantially improved not long before, the river lost much of its importance after the railway to Constantinople was completed.[362]

The fact that transportation by sea was considerably easier and cheaper than transportation on the Danube gave a clear advantage to the major naval powers and especially to Great Britain, with France a distant second.[363] The line most often used to transport mail, travelers, and in many cases goods was Marseille-Constantinople. The cheaper but slower alternative was transportation from Britain only by sea through the Atlantic, via Gibraltar and then through the Mediterranean. The increasing presence of the commercial ships

357 Walther Rechberger, "Zur Geschichte der Orientbahnen. Österreichische Eisenbahnpolitik auf dem Balkan," *Österreichische Osthefte* 2, no. 5 (1960): 348.

358 Stoyan Maslev, *Tärgoviyata mezhdu bălgarskite zemi i Transilvaniya prez XVI–XVII v.* (Sofia: BAN, 1991), 48.

359 Daskalov, *Bălgarskoto obshtestvo*, vol. 2, 205–206.

360 Harald Heppner "Die großen Wasserstraßen und ihre Bedeutung," in *Der Weg führt über Österreich*, 96.

361 Daskalov, *Bălgarskoto obshtestvo*, vol. 2, 206.

362 Lyde and Mockler-Ferryman, *A Military Geography of the Balkan Peninsula*, 26.

363 Wirth, *Der Balkan*, 367.

under the British flag was a serious concern for Germany and Austria-Hungary. They were deeply disturbed by the fact that starting in 1875, more British vessels passed through the Danube Delta than all other vessels put together.[364] The continental powers responded by launching railway projects.

To sum up, despite the slight advantage of the route on the Danube and even of the one via Trieste, in the 1860s Vienna-Constantinople postal connections took almost as long by water as they did overland. That indicates that the Belgrade-Constantinople land route was in poor condition at that time—in Western and Central Europe, overland mail transportation was faster in almost all cases, even before the construction of the railway lines. Still, that depended on the existence of suitable infrastructure (well-maintained and safe roads), as well as on the organization of the postal service itself. It must be added that in this case, the route via Trieste had a very long section by sea, while the waterway of the Danube was not yet entirely regulated, and the journey also included transfers on two occasions.

Only a few overland postal itineraries on the Balkans were faster than the alternative routes by sea: data from 1862 shows that the Vienna-Salonica connection needed seven days via Belgrade and eleven via Trieste.[365] In most other cases steamship connections were not only easier but also faster. Data of the Austrian postal authorities from the mid-1850s show that even before the construction of the railway line, the route via Ruse-Varna and then by steamship to the Ottoman capital was a faster option than the overland route from Ruse via Edirne, which was only rarely used for mail from Austria.[366] At that time the Ottoman authorities also established some regular steamship lines for a faster and more convenient connection between the capital and major port cities—twice a week between Constantinople and Izmit; once a week Constantinople-Izmir, Constantinople-Salonica, and Constantinople-Gemlik; and once every other week Constantinople-Trabzon.[367]

For the Habsburg Empire the main maritime outlet and the starting point of the steamship lines was Trieste: maritime service was organized first to the Ionian Islands and, from 1836, also to Alexandria and other ports in the Eastern Mediterranean.[368] The steamship line from Trieste along the Adriatic coast was

364 Paul Dehn, *L'Allemagne et les Chemins orientaux* (Paris: Schiller, 1883), 5.

365 ÖStA, HHStA, Administrative Archive, 4 F 49 Postwesen Levante (bis 1879), fol. 936.

366 ÖStA, HHStA, Staatenabteilung, 42 Türkei VIII F 49–53 (unpaginated); Klaus Riesinger, "Österreichs Eisenbahnwesen als Bindenglied zwischen Zentraleuropa und den Balkanländern," in *Der Weg führt über Österreich*, 111.

367 Çadırcı, *Tanzimat döneminde Anadolu kentlerinin sosyal ve ekonomik yapıları*, 303.

368 Patera, "Die Rolle der Habsburgmonarchie für den Postverkehr," 50–51.

particularly important because in this area there were no convenient roads—the steamship line operated once a week, and nine days were needed to reach Corfu, because the ships stopped at the ports on the coast and on the islands; there were also shorter lines to Pula, Metković, Gruž (the port for Dubrovnik/Ragusa), and Kotor/Catarro. In addition, once a week from Trieste, there was a steamer to Alexandria, and another one to Constantinople (the last one took between five-and-a-half and seven days). Generally speaking, steamship lines from Trieste never gained a leading role in long-distance travel and had greater importance for the Adriatic coast.[369]

Travel on any route could encounter difficulties and at times even became impossible. As mentioned, navigation on the Danube was seasonal. Overland postal connections continued during the winter but inevitably encountered troubles and delays when there were big snowfalls, as well as in spring when the snow melted.[370] In the winter, overland postal exchange between many places was less frequent—for example, weekly instead of twice a week. In certain areas of the Ottoman provinces, overland postal connections were also disrupted by brigands.[371] In times of war, any route could become impracticable—during the Franco-Austrian War of 1859, the connection via Trieste became too risky, and the overland postal connection via Belgrade had to be used instead, although it was not as fast.[372] Strained relations between neighbors or a country's desire to monopolize postal services could cause problems—for instance, in the 1860s the Austrian post encountered difficulties in passing through Serbia.[373] The establishment of quarantines during epidemics also slowed or even blocked postal delivery on the affected routes.[374] These circumstances were another reason for the postal authorities to maintain a couple of alternative itineraries, each with its own advantages and disadvantages—the overland postal connection via Belgrade and Sofia was one of these routes, although the slowest one. Given that mail was sent by the different itineraries on different days of the week, the fact that one of them took two or even three days more was not so important. By contrast, when the postal connection between two cities started to operate daily, considerably longer journeys could not be tolerated.

369 Heppner "Die großen Wasserstraßen und ihre Bedeutung," 96–98.

370 ÖStA, HHStA, Staatenabteilung, 42 Türkei VIII F 49–53 (not paginated).

371 Ibid.

372 Ibid.

373 Patera, "Die Rolle der Habsburgmonarchie für den Postverkehr," 61.

374 ÖStA/ HHStA, 3 F 49 Postwesen Staaten 1852–1868 Levante (bis 1879), fol. 94.

The shortcomings of the Constantinople-Sofia-Belgrade-Vienna overland connection became even clearer when viewed on a larger scale—as postal connections between Constantinople and Western European capitals like London and Paris. In the past the Habsburg Empire had a monopoly on postal services between Western Europe and the Ottoman capital; an attempt by the French authorities at the time of Napoleon to establish postal services by sea to Constantinople failed because it was not rapid enough.[375] The advent of steam navigation changed the situation dramatically. Starting from the early 1830s, steamers were able to travel between Marseille and Constantinople in seven days. Thus mail from the Ottoman capital reached Paris in thirteen days and reached London, Belgium, and the Netherlands in fifteen days, while the Austrian post needed twenty-two to twenty-five days for the same distances.[376] Data from different years and sources diverge (mostly because connections were gradually becoming faster), but all show the clear advantage of the connection through the Mediterranean, which became even faster with the completion of the Paris-Marseille railway line in 1852.

In 1854 the postal authorities in Vienna examined whether it was still possible to make a postal connection between Constantinople and London faster than the French one. One report claims that the French post needed ten days to transport the mail via Marseille, while via Vienna the connection could be achieved in nine-and-a-half days. No other source supports this optimistic interpretation, but it is still revealing to see how these nine-and-a-half days would be spent: London-Vienna, or approximately half of the distance, would be covered in two-and-a-half days, while Vienna-Constantinople would take seven days. More precisely, Vienna-(Buda)Pest needed half a day, (Buda)Pest-Semlin/Zemun (near Belgrade) needed one day, and then from Belgrade to Constantinople, the Turkish postal messengers (known as the "tatars") needed five-and-a-half days.[377]

Another report written shortly thereafter was more pessimistic about the possibilities of winning this competition. This report claims that the direct steamship connection between Constantinople and Marseille needed five days; Marseille-London took seven days; and even in the event of a delay, mail between Constantinople and London was transported within eight days at most. At the same time, it took the Austrian post twelve days to transport mail between Constantinople and London, and this was possible only in good weather. Travel by sea from Trieste to Constantinople could be shortened by

375 Patera, "Die Rolle der Habsburgmonarchie für den Postverkehr," 44–49.

376 Ibid., 51, 53 ff.

377 ÖStA, HHStA, Staatenabteilung, 42 Türkei VIII F 49–53 (not paginated).

redirecting it through the Isthmus of Corinth; in this case the time needed for the Constantinople-Vienna route could be reduced to five or six days, and for the entire Constantinople-London route via Vienna to eight or nine days, but that would still not be sufficient.[378] Similar attempts by the Austrian postal authorities to provide a faster connection between Constantinople and Western Europe failed in the subsequent two decades. Austrian steamships leaving from Trieste and even steamboats going up and down the Danube simply could not compete with the steamers leaving from Marseille and Brindisi.

Minor Delays on the Orient Express

As early as the nineteenth century, observers noted that because of the lack of good roads in the Ottoman Empire, the construction of railway lines would be key for the improvement of transport and communications.[379] The first ideas for a direct railway connection between Western Europe and the Ottoman capital, and then through Asia Minor until the Persian Gulf or even until India, appeared from the 1830s onwards.[380] A bit later, in his booklet on the improvement of the roads and the construction of railways in the Ottoman Empire, Ami Boué discussed mainly the construction of the Belgrade-Constantinople line and emphasized that building this line would be very easy because there were no serious physical obstacles.[381] In reality the implementation of this project took considerable time. Building this, the most important line in the Balkans, took much longer than lines of similar importance in Western and Central Europe did. The belated railway construction meant that, for several decades, steam navigation completely dominated as a means for fast transport to and from the Balkans.

The first railways in the region were built to connect port cities with the near hinterland, that is, as an extension of water transport. This was the case with the first line in Anatolia, Izmir-Aydın (1856–1866), as well as the Izmir-Kasaba line (1863–1865), the Mersin-Adana line (whose construction started in 1886), and the Mudanya-Bursa line (whose construction started in 1892). The same is true of the first railways in the new Kingdom of Greece—the Athens-Piraeus line, only 13 kilometers long, was completed in 1869; in the Peloponnese the line from Pyrgos (Olympia) to the port of Katakolon was completed in 1881; a similar case is that of the Agrinio-Mesolongi-Krinieri railway in Central

378 Ibid.

379 *Autriche et les chemins de fer turcs* (Vienna: Faesy & Frick, 1869), 13.

380 Momir Samardžić, "Trans-Balkan Railway Schemes and Italy (Late 19th–Early 20th Century)," *Etudes Balkaniques* 48, nos. 2–3 (2012): 121.

381 Boué, *Sur l'Établissement de bonnes Routes*, 18–19.

Greece, built in 1887–1892.[382] As mentioned, the first lines in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire (Cernavodă-Constanţa and Ruse-Varna) were built in order to shorten travel via the Danube to Constantinople. All these lines were extensions of water transport, not an alternative to it.

Only then came a turning point: a project for a railway connecting Constantinople to Central and Western Europe. The first contract for its construction was signed in 1869 with the company of Baron Hirsch. Shortly afterward, the Ottoman authorities assumed direct responsibility for the construction works and rerouted the planned line in order to connect the provinces in the Western Balkans to the Ottoman capital, which was considered more important than the rapid connection with the European countries. The revised plan envisaged a railway from Constantinople following the route via Edirne and Plovdiv to Sofia, but then the line had to turn southwest to Skopje, later towards Bosnia, and only then to connect with the Austro-Hungarian railway network. Interestingly, this plan coincided with the preference of Austrian government circles to build a railway to Constantinople and Salonica but to avoid Serbia. Austrian propaganda at that time advanced mainly economic arguments, namely that the line would thus avoid the "poor" territories of Serbia and cross through more prosperous regions,[383] but in fact political reasons were decisive. Actually, opinions in the Dual Monarchy diverged; leading circles in Budapest preferred a railway line via Belgrade and Niš.[384]

The construction of the railway line between Constantinople and Austria-Hungary started simultaneously on several segments of the envisaged line. Actually, Leandre Le Gay was appointed as vice-consul in Sofia precisely because of the ongoing work on the railway and the considerable presence of foreign nationals working on it.[385] In fact, the initial plan was to establish a French vice-consulate in Şumnu/Shumen, but it was abandoned because the project for a railway line from Yanbolu/Yambol to Shumen was postponed indefinitely and Le Gay was appointed in Sofia.[386] Lack of funding and then the Eastern crisis of 1875–1878 at first blocked work on the line via Sofia, and then the trajectory of the line was revised once again. In the meantime, besides the Constantinople-Edirne-Plovdiv-Pazardzhik line, only one more section

382 Fritz Stöckl, *Eisenbahnen in Südosteuropa: Jugoslawien, Griechenland, Rumänien, Bulgarien, Türkei* (Vienna: Bohmann, 1975), 79.

383 *Autriche et les chemins de fer turcs*, 16.

384 Dehn, *L'Allemagne et les Chemins orientaux*, 18.

385 Shortly before him, an Italian vice-consul was also appointed in the city. AMAE, CCC, Sofia, v. 1, 1875–1885, f. 17; Le Gay, *Diplomatichaski dokladi ot Sofia*, 26.

386 AMAE, CCC, Roustchouk, v. 1, 1867–1877, f. 132a–132d.

of around a hundred kilometers was built in Bosnia: Kostajnica-Novi-Banja Luka.[387] In 1874 the Salonica-Skopje-Kosovska Mitrovica section was completed, stretching from the envisaged branch to Salonica.

The belated construction of the railways in the Balkans was partly compensated by other lines, connecting the major port cities near the region. Initially, starting from the 1830s, the Western European capitals were most rapidly and conveniently connected to Constantinople with the steam line from Marseille (connected to the railway network in 1852). The construction of a railway along the Italian peninsula as far as Brindisi (1865) substantially shortened the connection by sea, especially for the Western Balkans (Greece and Albania). Finally, there was a relatively fast connection to Constantinople by the Austro-Hungarian and Russian railways and then with steamers from Odessa, because the city was connected to the railway network relatively early (especially in comparison with cities in the Balkans)—in 1865.

What had a greater impact was the construction of railway lines through Romania, which allowed a much faster connection to the Eastern Balkans and, most importantly, to Constantinople. Starting in the late 1860s and for the decade that followed, railway construction in Romania progressed rapidly, in sharp contrast with the situation in the other Balkan countries. Around the mid-1870s in the Ottoman Empire there were only a couple of short railway lines that were not connected to one another (most of them—five, to be precise—were in the Balkans). In Greece the single genuine railway line was the short connection between Athens and the port of Piraeus. In Serbia there were only plans for building railway lines. And in Montenegro there were not even plans—the only road suitable for wheeled traffic was the one connecting the port of Kotor to the capital, Cetinje. At the same time, in Romania the basis was laid for a relatively well-developed network directly connected to the European one.[388] The first cross-border line was an expansion of the railway network in the easternmost provinces of Austria-Hungary into northern Romania, in Moldavia: the Lemberg/Lviv-Chernivtsi/Cernăuți-Iaşi line was completed in 1870. Further on, the line continued to the south until Brăila, and then southeast to the Romanian capital, where the line reached in 1875. Here it connected with the already existing Bucharest-Giurgiu line (1869), which in turn made it possible (after crossing the Danube) to continue on Ottoman territory through the established route using the Ruse-Varna railway and then a steamer to Constantinople. The route was relatively long, but this was the fastest option. The construction of the second and more convenient line between

387 Crousse, *La péninsule gréco-slave*, 348 ff.

388 Crousse, *La péninsule gréco-slave*, 345–355, 376–379, 403–404, 435–436, 465.

the Romanian capital and the Austro-Hungarian railway network started from Bucharest, went via Craiova, and initially reached Vârciorova, a small locality near Orşova. In 1878 this line was completed as far as Temesvár/Timişoara and thus connected to the network of the Habsburg Empire.[389] The third connection, which was the shortest yet the most difficult to construct, went via Braşov/Kronstadt-Sighişoara. It was completed in 1879 and became the main railway connection between Bucharest and Budapest, Vienna, and Central Europe in general.

The completion of the railway lines through Romania—from the frontier with the Habsburg Empire to the Danube—was decisive in providing faster connections between Western Europe and Constantinople. Before then, the best options for fast transportation of mail to the Ottoman capital from the north were the Danube and the steamship line from Odessa. In the late 1870s the route via Bucharest-Ruse-Varna emerged as one of the options for a rapid postal connection between London and Constantinople. Actually, on the eve of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, Ruse was already an important postal junction in the region.[390] By the end of the Ottoman period, the cities in the Danube Vilayet (Northern Bulgaria plus Dobrudja) were receiving mail from abroad via the administrative center Ruse. Indirect evidence of this is one complaint by the Romanian postal authorities in November 1879 that mail from London for Constanţa was being delayed because, following the practice of previous years, it was being sent to Ruse.[391]

During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, connections through the Black Sea and the Danube were interrupted, and British postal authorities had to rely only on steamship lines from Marseille and Brindisi.[392] Data from the autumn of 1878, that is, shortly after the end of the war, show that the British post carried mail from London to Constantinople nine times a week (twice on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, and not at all on Sunday) using five different postal routes. In most cases mail was transported by rail through Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia or Romania, and then by steamer through the Black Sea: three times a week via Odessa, twice via Varna, and once via Galaţi (downstream from this port, maritime steamers were used). The other itineraries went through Western Europe and the Mediterranean: two times a week via Brindisi and once a week via Marseille.[393] Shortly thereafter, the faster route

389 Stöckl, *Eisenbahnen in Südosteuropa*, 113–114.

390 Patera, "Die Rolle der Habsburgmonarchie für den Postverkehr," 73.

391 The British Postal Museum and Archive (BPMA), Post 29/288 D.

392 BPMA, Post 29/226 A, files I and II.

393 BPMA, Post 29/250 D, file I.

via Bucharest-Ruse-Varna almost entirely replaced the longer itineraries via Odessa and Galaţi: data from 1881 show that the Constantinople-London connection via Varna took five days, and via Odessa and via Galaţi, it took six.[394] Again, considerably more time was needed for travel in the Balkan area. The Constantinople-Bucharest section took more than two days (fifty-one hours), which was due mostly to the long stops in Ruse and Varna. The Bucharest-Budapest connection demanded one more day (twenty-three to twenty-five hours). In Western Europe, the travel was significantly faster, and for the distance from Vienna to Paris, thirty-nine-and-a-half hours were needed (forty-seven hours and forty minutes to London). The time for travel between Vienna and Constantinople via Bucharest was shortened further in subsequent years. The railways through Romania allowed the Austrian post to regain, after an interruption of several decades, its role of intermediary in the mail transfer from Rome, Paris, and London to Constantinople and vice versa.

Not all provinces in the Balkans benefited from these new possibilities, primarily because of the poor internal road and railway network within the Ottoman Empire, as well as in its successor states. In a letter of September 28, 1880, the Bulgarian postal authorities demanded a flexible approach in order to cope with this problem. Up until then, mail for Bulgaria was delivered at Ruse, which was fine for the eastern part of the principality but caused considerable delays for the western part. Therefore, the authorities in Sofia demanded that mail for Western Bulgaria (including the capital, Sofia) be transferred during the summer by the Austrian postal service operating on the Danube and delivered at the port of Lom, and during the winter in Vidin, via the postal office in Orşova.[395] In other words, because of the still-primitive internal transport connections in Bulgaria, the eastern part of the principality benefited from the lines to Bucharest and then to Giurgiu, while the western part still had to rely on the steamboats on the Danube as well as on the railway from Budapest via Szeged and Timişoara to Orşova (actually, this was one of the lines to Bucharest, the one that continued via Craiova and was completed in 1878).

Konstantin Jireček, who resided in Sofia from 1879 to 1884, describes how this arrangement worked in practice. Mail from Western Europe was delivered three times a week: on the Danube until the port of Lom and then with postal carriages to Sofia. During the winter, when the navigation on the Danube stopped, the connection was made (after crossing the Danube) at the railway station in Craiova, in Romania. But when the Danube at Vidin-Calafat was frozen, connection with the European railway network and postal services also

394 BPMA, Post 29/250 D, files 12 and 13.

395 BPMA, Post 29/288 D.

became impossible, and Sofia often remained without postal connections with Europe, sometimes for more than a week. Sometimes winter storms broke the telegraph wires.[396] On the whole, there was little improvement in the postal services from the time when Leandre Le Gay served in Sofia, despite the fact that Sofia became the capital of the newly established Principality of Bulgaria, and new possibilities for faster connection had appeared in the meantime. Just like Le Gay, Jireček seemed satisfied with the Austrian post and often used it (before the closure of their office in 1881) but more than once complained about the local (by then Bulgarian) post.[397] Connections with the outside world were substantially improved only with the completion of the railway line to Vienna in 1888.

The completion of the railways in Romania made it possible in October 1883 to start operating the Orient Express. The route at this time went from Paris through Germany (Strasburg, Stuttgart, Munich) and Austria-Hungary (Linz, Vienna, Budapest, Szeged, Timişoara, Orşova), and then via Bucharest to Giurgiu. Then, after crossing the Danube, it used the Ruse-Varna line and finally a steamship to Constantinople. Twice a week via Bucharest-Ruse-Varna, the Orient Express went between Paris and Constantinople in eighty-two hours (ninety-two hours starting from London); this route was twelve to twenty-four hours shorter than previous itineraries.[398] Certain inconveniences and wastes of time resulted from the transfer to vessels (to cross the Danube between Giurgiu and Ruse, and then again to take the steamer at Varna) and the inevitably slower transportation by water on the last section through the Black Sea. Despite these shortcomings, the Orient Express via Bucharest unquestionably became the fastest postal connection to Constantinople. In November 1883 British postal authorities stopped using the connections to Constantinople via Marseille and Brindisi, which were of no use after the Orient Express started operating.

The efforts to build a direct railway line between Vienna and Constantinople through the Balkans continued independently of the establishment of this faster connection via Romania. Concerning the postal services there were proposals to use the route of the future trans-Balkan line even before its completion. In 1879 the British postal service studied the possibility of using a Niš-Sofia connection; it concluded that this route offered relatively good conditions, because the road (most of it built under the governorship of Midhad Pasha) could be used in all seasons. Travel with postal carriage on this

396 Konstantin Jireček, *Pătuvaniya po Bălgariya* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1972), 104.

397 Konstantin Jireček, *Bălgarski dnevnik*, vols. 1–2 (Plovdiv: Hr. G. Danov, 1930 and 1932).

398 BPMA, Post 29/340 E.

section typically took twenty-eight hours but could be reduced to fourteen to sixteen hours with better carriages. All told, the Belgrade-Sofia route needed sixty-eight hours, but that could be reduced to forty to forty-eight hours given the relatively good road. According to a report from July 1879, the time for the London-Constantinople postal connection via Serbia could be reduced to less than a week.[399] Still, connections via Romania remained the preferred option for the next couple of years.[400]

After the end of the Russo-Turkish War, the Berlin Treaty envisaged finishing the railway connection between the Ottoman capital and Central Europe after an agreement between Austria-Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire, which effectively meant that the line had to pass through Belgrade. The leading circles in the newly created Principality of Bulgaria preferred to complete the line to Austria-Hungary via Sofia-Kyustendil-Skopje and then through Bosnia, but the decisions of the Berlin Congress imposed a connection via Serbia.[401]

From the Austro-Hungarian side, there was a line as far as Subotica (completed in 1869), but the last section via Novi Sad until the Serbian border was missing. The railway from Subotica to Novi Sad was completed in 1883, and further to Belgrade in 1884; during the same time, the line from Belgrade to Niš was completed. In this way more than half of the missing section of the railway line between Vienna and Constantinople was completed. Moreover, during the following year, 1885, there were attempts to use this route for direct travel to Constantinople even before the completion of the whole line—the section that had no railway line (Niš-Pirot-Caribrod-Sofia-Belovo) was covered by postal carriage.[402] The missing sections were built in 1885–1888: in Serbia these included the continuation of the line from Niš via Pirot to the Bulgarian border, as well as the Niš-Vranje-Skopje branch, and in Bulgaria, the Caribrod-Sofia-Belovo line.

The new route of the Orient Express via Belgrade-Niš-Sofia-Plovdiv-Edirne provided an unbeatable postal connection with Constantinople. The British postal authorities' only uncertainty was how mail from London should be transported through the rest of the continent—via Hamburg or via the port of Oostende in Belgium and then via Cologne; the latter option turned out to be faster.[403] Three times a week, the train followed the new route, while another

399 BPMA, Post 29/288 D.

400 BPMA, Post 29/747 B, file III.

401 Daskalov, *Bălgarskoto obshtestvo*, vol. 2, 187.

402 Stöckl, *Eisenbahnen in Südosteuropa*, 215.

403 BPMA, Post 29/747 B.

two times a week, it still used the route via Bucharest.[404] After World War I the route of the train in Western Europe changed. After the opening of the Simplon Tunnel between Switzerland and Italy, the train followed a shorter route from Paris to Belgrade, via Trieste, Ljubljana, and Zagreb,[405] instead of the old route via Vienna, the capital of the defeated and partitioned Austria-Hungary. The official name of the train changed to the Simplon Orient Express. Actually, mail was transported not only by the Orient Express but also by other trains using the same line,[406] since the luxury train's capacity was not sufficient.[407] Obviously it was also more expensive—in 1931 the Bulgarian postal service gave up using the Simplon Orient Express for financial reasons and started to rely only on the other trains.[408] In any case, the completion of the railway lines from Vienna to Bucharest, Constantinople, and Salonica led to a complete reorganization of the rapid connections between the Balkans and Western Europe. It was in sharp contrast with the situation in previous years, when the steamship lines from Marseille, Brindisi, Trieste, and Odessa competed to provide a faster postal connection to Constantinople.

Taking a different approach, British postal authorities proceeded with parcels to Constantinople, which were transported via Calais-Marseille (i.e., crossing France overland) and then by steamer, which was faster, or entirely by sea through the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, which was cheaper.[409] Sending parcels with the Orient Express would have been much faster but also extremely expensive.[410] Gradually, and especially during the interwar period, the British post started to rely more and more on other trains to send parcels to the Balkan countries.[411] Still, transporting parcels by sea rather than train had the undeniable advantage of avoiding the customs restrictions of the individual countries. These restrictions differed from one country to the next, and before accepting a parcel for delivery, the postal authorities had to take into account the restrictions for every country through which the parcel would pass.[412]

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404 Stöckl, *Eisenbahnen in Südosteuropa*, 215.

405 Walther Rechberger, "Zur Geschichte der Orientbahnen II. Österreichische Eisenbahnpolitik auf dem Balkan," *Österreichische Osthefte* 3, no. 2 (1961): 109.

406 BPMA, Post 33/3100, file 38.

407 BPMA, Post 33/405, files 17 and 14.

408 BPMA, Post 33/477, file XXVI.

409 BPMA, Post 29/446 E; Post 29/730 A, file III.

410 BPMA, Post 29/730 A, file I.

411 BPMA, Post 33/493, files I, V, VIII, XXIV, XV, etc.; Post 33/1468, files VI, XIII, and XV.

412 BPMA, Post 29/730 A, file IV.

The completion of the railway lines used by the Orient Express, as well as the connection between Niš and Salonica, resolved the problem with rapid postal connections not only with the Ottoman capital but also with major cities in much of the Balkans—in the new Principality of Bulgaria and in Thrace and Macedonia in the Ottoman Empire. The problem was solved even earlier for Romania, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (under Austro-Hungarian occupation). In parallel with this, railway connections also started to play a leading role in providing a faster connection between the largest cities within the region. Symbolic in this regard was the construction of a railway between two major port cities that were otherwise well connected by sea: Constantinople and Salonica. The missing sections of the Constantinople-Edirne-Dedeağaç/Alexandroupoli-Salonica line were built in 1893–1896. All things considered, waterways were of secondary importance for Southeastern Europe, especially after the completion of the major railway lines in the late nineteenth century.[413] Thereafter the development of postal services in most parts of the Balkans was closely connected with railway transport. Far different was the case of the Kingdom of Greece, the westernmost Ottoman provinces in the Balkans (and later of independent Albania), and Montenegro and some Dalmatian port cities.

In 1888, when the railway line between Vienna and Constantinople was completed, all connections between Western Europe and Greece were still by water. Mail for Greece was sent daily through Italy via Brindisi to the port of Patras, and then by the newly opened Piraeus-Athens-Patras railway, which reduced this last section of the journey to only seven hours.[414] In this way mail between London and Athens was delivered in five days, and half of this time was needed for the section between Brindisi and the Greek capital.[415] The other option for sending mail to Greece—through Germany and Austria-Hungary and then by steamship from Trieste—did not offer any advantage (as a detailed analysis from 1899 reveals) and was not used for letters or parcels.[416] Parcels from London to Greece were also sent mostly via Brindisi; the second option was to send them via Marseille.[417]

This situation remained practically unchanged until World War I, both in terms of route and the time needed to deliver the mail. Data from late 1912 and from 1913 show that mail from London to Athens was sent via Brindisi-Patras-Piraeus in a minimum of four-and-a-half days, often within five-and-a-half

413 Heppner, "Die großen Wasserstraßen und ihre Bedeutung," 100.

414 BPMA, Post 29/455 B.

415 BPMA, Post 29/546 E.

416 BPMA, Post 29/1369, file II.

417 BPMA, Post 29/1369, file IV.

days, but there were complaints that in practice it took six to seven days; the Brindisi-Patras connection by sea alone took thirty-six hours.[418] In practice the postal connection from Western Europe to Athens took at least one day more than the connection to Sofia or even to Constantinople.

In the case of Greece, the radical change took place after the end of World War I with the completion of the final segments of the Athens-Salonica railway line in 1918. The postal authorities in London issued instructions on July 12, 1920, that stated, "In future bags for Greece containing letters and postcards should be marked for transmission by the Simplon Orient Express." On the next day, July 13, an important specification was added: "Mail for Corfu should continue to be sent via France and Italy for transmission by sea from Italy." The reason was that in the cases when mail to Corfu was carried by train via Salonica, it took considerably more time than on the established route via Brindisi. Still, for most of Greece the new arrangement provided faster service, and starting in October 1920, the mail for the islands in the Aegean, more specifically, for Crete, Chios, and Syros, also started to be transmitted by the Simplon Orient Express.[419]

This arrangement was not yet definitive: starting from December 1921, Greek postal authorities demanded on several occasions that mail for most of the country (aside from Salonica) be transferred via Brindisi, through the route used for the mail for Corfu and Patras. That was applied beginning in early 1922; ordinary mail to Salonica was transported by the Simplon Orient Express, while registered mail went via Athens.[420] The results were unsatisfactory, and two years later the Greek postal authorities again gave preference to the services provided by the Simplon Orient Express via Belgrade, while the route via Brindisi remained in use only for registered letters, as well as for mail to the Ionian Islands.[421] Data from June 1925 confirm that three times a week, mail between Paris and Athens was carried by the Simplon Orient Express, and on the other days of the week with another Belgrade-Athens train; again, only Corfu and Patras remained an exception.[422] From this moment on, mail between Great Britain and almost all of Greece was transported by rail.[423] As shown in the Greek case, railway connections with the southernmost part of the Balkans were established relatively late in time. However, railway connections

418 BPMA, Post 29/941, file 1.
419 BPMA, Post 29/941, file 4.
420 BPMA, Post 29/941, file 5.
421 BPMA, Post 29/941, file 11.
422 BPMA, Post 29/941, file 8.
423 BPMA, Post 29/941, file 18.

to the Adriatic coast were even more difficult to build due to the mountainous terrain. Therefore, the sea routes to the Adriatic coast remained the more convenient option for much longer. The situation was similar to the north of Western Greece—in Albania, Montenegro, and on the Dalmatian coast.

In 1914, on the eve of World War I, newly independent Albania was receiving and sending mail via Italy, more precisely via the ports of Brindisi and Bari, while connection via Venice was "slower and less frequent."[424] At that time Albania's telegraph connection with the outside world also passed through Italy.[425] Almost all international mail to and from Albania continued to be transferred via Italy after the war, in the early 1920s.[426] A report dated April 26, 1921, shows that there was also a connection via Greece.[427] Still, as a whole the connection through the Adriatic had no real alternative, as the following example shows. In late June 1922 the Albanian authorities demanded that from then on, all mail be transferred via Yugoslavia. However, these instructions were retracted by March 1923.[428] Even during this short interval, the British post continued in any case to rely on connections via Italy, which were faster and more regular.[429] The situation did not change significantly in the following decade. And in 1935, when British postal authorities were looking for an alternative route to send mail to Albania—through Germany, Austria, and Yugoslavia instead of the established route through Italy—it turned out that Yugoslavia sent its own mail to Albania through infrequent opportunities by sea, while Germany itself sent mail to Albania through Italy, via the port of Bari—every day except Sunday.[430]

The case of Montenegro was very similar. According to information from 1903, mail from Great Britain was sent here via Germany and Austria-Hungary and then by sea; mail from Serbia and from Bosnia and Herzegovina was also transferred by Austrian steamers.[431] Later, after the founding of Yugoslavia, the cities on the Adriatic coast continued to receive international mail by sea. For instance, instructions from 1934–1935 and 1938 called for parcels to Zadar, other parts of Dalmatia, and the islands in the Adriatic to be sent via Italy.[432]

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424 BPMA, Post 29/1200 D, file III.

425 BPMA, Post 29/1200 D, file I.

426 BPMA, Post 29/303 B, files I, II and IV.

427 BPMA, Post 29/721 A, file II.

428 BPMA, Post 29/721 A, file IV.

429 BPMA, Post 29/721 A, file IV, V and VI.

430 BPMA, Post 29/721 A, file VIII.

431 BPMA, Post 29/785 A.

432 BPMA, Post 33/15, files XXVIII and 36.

By contrast, parcels for the rest of Yugoslavia were usually sent by railway transport.[433] Thus the eastern shore of the Adriatic continued for a long time to rely on sea connections.

From Underdevelopment to Balkanization of Transport Connections

Among the modern means of transport, the Balkans first benefited from steam navigation, although the delay in modernizing port facilities caused certain inconveniences. The lag in connecting the Balkan capitals to the European railway network was particularly pronounced. For instance, although Belgrade was next to the frontier with Austria-Hungary, it was not connected by railway to Central Europe until 1884—only four years before Sofia and Constantinople (1888) and thirty-three years after (Buda-)Pest (1851). Bucharest was the first capital in the region connected to the European railway network; this materialized only in 1875 with a relatively long connection via Lemberg/Lviv, and in 1878 and 1879 with the more direct lines, via Timişoara and Sighişoara respectively.

Building the railway lines was not enough—even contemporary observers noted that trains in the Balkans were very slow; in some cases the average speed was only half that of trains in developed European countries. Viewed in a long-term perspective, the Balkan countries benefited only a little from the innovations in railway technology. That could be seen even in the case of the Orient Express: in 1889 the distance from Paris to Constantinople could be covered in 67 hours and 35 minutes, while in 1973 it was 56 hours and 14 minutes.[434] When one factored in the time-consuming border controls, there was no point in operating this train, and it was shut down in 1977.

Another important criterion is the frequency with which a specific line is used—trains passed more often on the Central European sections of the lines than in the Balkan countries. For instance, during the interwar period, the Simplon Orient Express departed every day from Paris to Belgrade and then on different days of the week to Bucharest, to Istanbul (via Sofia), or to Athens. The same is true of steam navigation: on the eve of World War I, there was daily steamboat service from Vienna to Budapest and from Budapest to Semlin/Belgrade, but only four times a week from Budapest to Galaţi.[435]

Let us look once more at postal services. As we have seen, in the nineteenth century and where they were allowed to operate, the foreign postal services in the Balkans worked more efficiently than the local ones. But they served only a few cities. The reason was the very limited amount of mail exchanged

433 BPMA, Post 33/15, file XIV.

434 Stöckl, *Eisenbahnen in Südosteuropa*, 222.

435 Heppner, "Die großen Wasserstraßen und ihre Bedeutung," 98.

between the interior provinces of a vast but sparsely populated empire and the European countries. In most cities of the Ottoman Empire (with the exception of port cities), the communities of foreigners were relatively small, and trade with the outside world was modest. Thus the foreign postal services had no motivation to even try to provide services in such places.[436]

In addition, foreign postal services faced restrictions, as the Ottoman and other Balkan national authorities sought to monopolize this lucrative activity. The process of eliminating foreign postal services took the longest in the Ottoman Empire. There were various initiatives and pressure from the Ottoman government to eliminate the foreign postal services in the 1860s and 1870s.[437] In the end the foreign postal services in the Ottoman Empire were closed down only in 1914,[438] but for several decades their activity was reduced to mail delivery to and from abroad. As a rule they were not allowed to carry mail from one part of the Ottoman Empire to another.

In fact, Ottoman authorities were disturbed mainly by the fact that many customers avoided using their own postal service; the authorities simply wanted to get rid of their foreign rivals. The problem is that the Ottoman authorities did not plan to take any practical steps to improve the speed, accuracy, or reliability of their postal service.[439] Technical backwardness was only part of the problem. In the nineteenth century the Ottoman state maintained and improved the communication network serving its own administration. Yet the postal services offered to private individuals were slow, unreliable, and expensive.

In practice, the small national states were more resolute in eliminating foreign postal services. In Serbia and Romania, the state created a monopoly on postal services in the 1860s. In the new Principality of Bulgaria, the Austrian post was allowed to operate for only a few more years—the office in Sofia was closed down in 1881, as was the office in Varna in 1884. Thus the national postal authorities achieved a monopoly in the respective country, but in practice customers were deprived of an opportunity for faster and more reliable service.

The impact of the state monopoly could be seen even more clearly in the usage of the telegraph. The telegraph was adopted in the Ottoman Empire with

436 BPMA, Post 29/267, file II.

437 ÖStA, HHStA Administrative Archive, 4 F49 Postwesen Levante (bis 1879), fol. 1032; BPMA, Post 29/267, file 1.

438 BPMA, Post 29/896 C, file III.

439 BPMA, Post 45/5, *Rapport adressée a S.E. Haydar Effendi, Directeur général des Postes et Télégraphes par Frank Ives Sandamore C.B. Directeur général des Postes Internationales Ottomanes* (Constantinople: Imprimerie "Levant Times," July 21, 1879).

some delay during the Crimean War, but then the network rapidly expanded, and by the 1860s it covered even small administrative centers. By that time the telegraph network already functioned relatively well and was widely used by the Ottoman authorities. At the same time, private individuals could rarely afford to use the telegraph, and rich merchants were among its few customers. As we have seen, the cost led even a French diplomat to avoid using the telegraph a good twenty years after its advent in the Ottoman Empire.

A major problem was the relatively slow mail delivery in the Balkan countries themselves. Evidence from the 1880s shows that the transportation of mail from one city to another in the new Principality of Bulgaria took from a couple of days up to one week; faster connections existed only between port cities on the Danube and the cities along the Ruse-Varna line.[440] In the early 1880s a letter between two far-apart cities in Bulgaria, such as Sofia and Varna, needed more time to reach its destination (up to seven days) than a letter from London to Constantinople (five days). The same was also valid for telegrams; it often took more time to send them within the country than to receive them from or send them to Europe.[441] These delays remained a problem for decades, and in a 1930 report, the British acting consul in Sofia, Mr. S. Harrison, made the same conclusion about the poor performance of the Bulgarian post: "It may take as long for a letter to travel from one point to another in Bulgaria, as it takes for a letter from Sofia to reach Canada."[442] Other complaints from the postal services in the country resulted mostly from the high percentage of lost letters and violations of the confidentiality of correspondence.[443]

Postal connections were organized to give the most important centers priority. As a result, even large provincial cities were in many respects marginalized, and the services there were considerably slower, even when they were located on the main routes. According to a 1925 report, this was the case even with Edirne. Edirne was located on the route of the Simplon Orient Express, but it took a long time for letters to arrive there, as they were first sorted in Istanbul and only then sent back to Edirne. In the end, the British postal services gave

440 Stefan Detchev, "Komunikatsii, politika i obshtestveno mnenie v Bălgariya prez 80–te i 90–te godini na XIX vek," in *Politika, pol, kultura. Statii i studii po nova bălgarska istoriya* (Stara Zagora: Kota, 2010), 118–119.

441 Pavel Dimitrov, *Poshtite, telegrafite i telefonite u nas. Krit*[ichen] *etyud* (Sofia: Grazhdanin, 1908), 58–64.

442 BPMA, Post 33/1885 A, file 5.

443 Dimitrov, *Poshtite, telegrafite i telefonite u nas*, 65 ff; Daskalov, *Bălgarskoto obshtestvo*, vol. 2, 211, 215–216.

up on the idea of making a separate bag for Edirne, because there were so few letters for the city that it was not worth the effort.[444]

The slow pace of railway and road construction in the individual countries also impeded transport connections and postal services. The problem remained particularly acute in the interior of Anatolia during the interwar period. British posts sent parcels to Turkey almost exclusively by sea (more than 90 percent), but the main problem was transferring them to cities in the interior that were not yet connected to the railway network.[445] Parcels were charged nearly twice as much as usual if sent to places in the interior of Anatolia, and only small parcels were accepted in such cases: parcels between 10 and 20 kilograms were accepted only for port cities and places accessible by train.[446] Postal connections became much easier once these places were connected to the railway network and thus to the major ports. For instance, after the completion of the railway lines to Elazığ and Malatya in 1934, as well to Diyarbakır in 1935, the prices for sending parcels to these places fell.[447]

The limited possibilities for transport connections between the individual Balkan countries were one of the most important problems. The railway network aptly illustrates the shortcomings caused by the planning and development of the various transport networks within the national framework. The roots of this problem are also partly due to the fact that the Balkan states inherited very few railway lines from the Ottoman Empire—only a couple were built in the late Ottoman period, despite the fact that from the very beginning, experts in the field insisted (and Ottoman authorities agreed) that in order to achieve economic growth, a whole network was needed.[448] Aside from the main line via Belgrade-Niš-Sofia-Plovdiv-Edirne to Constantinople (1888) and the branch via Niš and Skopje to Salonica (1889), the projects for trans-Balkan railway lines did not materialize in the end, due to the rivalries among the individual countries in the region and the lack of capital.

As a result, almost all lines in the region were built by the national states and were placed according to the states' priorities. In most cases there was no economic justification for building the new railways and, at least initially, the state had to heavily subsidize not only their construction but also their

444 BPMA, Post 33/3100, file 21.

445 BPMA, Post 33/1469, files XLIV and XXVI.

446 BPMA, Post 33/1469, file XXVIII.

447 BPMA, Post 33/1469, files XLVII and 54.

448 *Autriche et les chemins de fer turcs*, 16: "une seule ligne ne pouvait pas suffire, il fallait un réseau tout entier qui vînt se jiondre au réseau européen, le compléter et le continuer jusqu'à Constantinople et au ports de la mer Noire."

operation.[449] At the same time, overall trade between the individual Balkan states was very limited and could not serve as a reason for new cross-border railway projects.[450] The final outcome was the construction of several national railway networks, which even today are connected with the neighboring countries at only a few points. Thus the only railway connection between Serbia (respectively Yugoslavia) and Bulgaria is the one completed in 1888. Likewise, Bulgaria and Greece are connected by only one railway line (Sofia-Thessaloniki), completed in 1965. A good example of how the establishment of political borders halted the construction of certain lines is the case of the section between Sofia and Skopje. Construction was interrupted on the eve of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878—only temporarily, it was believed. But thereafter, the two cities never became part of the same country, except for short periods in wartime, and thus this line is still unfinished. In several cases cross-border lines were created simply by the drawing of new political borders that crossed an existing railway, and not by conscious planning. This is the case, for instance, with the Edirne-Dedeağaç/Alexandroupoli railway connection.

In the Eastern Balkans (specifically, in Epirus, Albania, and Montenegro), railway connections were built at a very late stage, despite the various projects for a railway crossing Albanian territory already in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Italians envisaged the construction of a line from the Adriatic port city of Valona/Vlora towards Thessaly, as well as a line connecting the Adriatic to the Danube, but that ran counter to Austro-Hungarian interests.[451] Serbia, the only country in the region without direct access to the sea, was also interested in the construction of a line towards the Adriatic[452] to some port in Northern Albania or (as the Montenegrin authorities advocated) Montenegro. There was no result in the short term. One reason was that the terrain was difficult: in the mid-nineteenth century, when Ami Boué suggested the construction of several lines crossing the Balkans, he devoted the most space in his text to the line linking Belgrade and Scutari/Shkodër, whose construction appeared to be much more complicated than all the others.[453] Rivalries and the irreconcilable preferences of the affected countries blocked the implementation of these projects until World War I, and after the war the radically modified political map of the region postponed them for even longer. After the

449 Daskalov, *Bălgarskoto obshtestvo*, vol. 2, 190.

450 Rechberger, "Zur Geschichte der Orientbahnen II," 110.

451 Wirth, *Der Balkan*, 369, 371; Momir Samardžić, "Trans-Balkan Railway Schemes and Italy (Late 19th–Early 20th Century)," *Etudes Balkaniques* 48, nos. 2–3 (2012): 123–127.

452 Lyde and Mockler-Ferryman, *A Military Geography of the Balkan Peninsula*, 25.

453 Boué, *Sur l'Établissement de bonnes Routes*, 20–32.

creation of Yugoslavia, Serbian ambitions for an outlet on the Adriatic coast of Northern Albania or Montenegro lost urgency: for a long time (until the railway line from Belgrade to Bar was completed in 1976), Rijeka served as the main maritime port for Belgrade.[454] Albania itself remained isolated in terms of land connections and was connected by rail with the outside world with a line to Montenegro only in 1985.

The shortage of cross-border railway lines was recognized as a severe problem at a relatively early stage, and various initiatives were proposed to overcome it. In the early 1930s, at a series of conferences, representatives of the Balkan countries discussed the possibilities of improving road and railway connections between the states in the region and their capitals.[455] This was seen as a key element of the wider project for Balkan cooperation that was fashionable at the time. As a former director of the Bulgarian State Railways put it, "The rapprochement of the Balkan peoples could be best achieved with a policy of rapprochement through transport connections."[456] In the end, the attempts to improve cross-border connections failed due to the rivalries between the neighboring states. The joint projects during the communist period also had only limited results, partly because some states followed an independent course.

It was again the political borders that reinforced some "natural borders." Precisely because the Lower Danube is, for most of its length, a political frontier, it is only rarely crossed by bridges—at a relatively late stage, only two bridges were built on the Serbian-Romanian border (part of the hydroelectric power stations at the Iron Gates, completed in 1972 and 1984, respectively) and another two on the much longer border between Romania and Bulgaria (Ruse-Giurgiu, 1954; Vidin-Calafat, 2013). By contrast, Northern Dobrudja was connected to the Romanian Old Kingdom with a bridge at Cernavodă, completed in 1895. This bridge gave new life to the steamship connections from Constanţa to the Ottoman capital. The Orient Express via Bucharest started to use this route in order to avoid a transfer to cross the Danube at Giurgiu-Ruse. Before World War I the German railway authorities relied on an express train through Romanian territory until Constanţa and then a connection was made with a steamer through the Black Sea to Constantinople. That made it possible

454 Editor's note in Cvijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique*, 519.

455 Lyuben Bozhkov, *Săobshtitelni problemi na Balkanite* (Sofia: Grafiya, 1936), 17 ff.

456 Lubin Bochkoff [= Lyuben Bozhkov], *Quelques notes sur les communications dans les Balkans. Principales lignes ferroviares. Ponts sur le Danube. Issue à la mer d'Égée* (Sofia: Academie Bulgare des Sciences et des Arts, 1945), 49.

to avoid the Hungarian part of the Dual Monarchy, as well as the Slavic states in the Balkans.[457]

The problem of limited cross-border connections reappeared later in the case of motorways. Let us take once again the example of the Istanbul-Sofia-Belgrade road. The first sections of motorway were built between the largest cities within the respective countries—between Plovdiv and Sofia in Bulgaria, between Niš and Belgrade in Serbia, and so on. The sections from Niš to the Bulgarian border and then on to Sofia, as well as the one from Plovdiv to the Turkish border, remained ordinary highways for a long time, with one lane in each direction. The motorways were built not on "the main road between Istanbul and Vienna" but rather between the main cities within the individual countries. One example of the continuing impact of the national borders on infrastructure projects is the Egnatia Motorway. The name comes from the Via Egnatia, the Roman road between Dyrrachium/Durrës and Byzantium/Constantinople/Istanbul, but the new motorway parallels only part of the ancient road. Although the Egnatia Motorway was constructed after the fall of the Iron Curtain, it was built only on Greek territory—starting from Igoumenitsa on the Adriatic instead of Durrës in Albania, up to the Turkish border.

Bridge Between Europe and Asia

As mentioned above, the main railway line crossing the Balkans was built primarily in order to reach Constantinople. That, in turn, was related to the more ambitious goal of continuing this line to "Asia"—to India, or at least to the Persian Gulf. Actually, the land route between Western Europe and India was used in the past. For instance, in the early nineteenth century, there was an overland postal connection from Constantinople via Aleppo until the mouth of the Euphrates and then by sea to India.[458] The first telegraph line to India also crossed the Balkans and Anatolia, because until the mid-1860s the technology was not advanced enough to rely on undersea cables.[459]

In this case as well, the situation changed dramatically with the advent of the steamship, which gave the waterways new importance for the needs of rapid postal connection between the Western European countries and their colonies.

457 Wirth, *Der Balkan*, 371.

458 Crousse, *La péninsule gréco-slave*, 354; Sarah Searight, "A Waghorn Letter Book for 1840," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, third series, vol. 7, no. 2 (1997): 229.

459 Andrea Giuntini, "The Power of Cables: Submarine Communication in the Mediterranean," in *Communication and Its Lines: Telegraphy in the 19th Century among Economy, Politics and Technology*, ed. Andrea Giuntini (Prato: Istituto di studi storici postali, 2004), 76–78.

Initially, during the 1820s, British postal authorities considered two options for a postal route to India. The first was shorter, but several means of transport were needed—after the English Channel, it involved crossing France overland, then continuing by steamer through the Mediterranean (with a stop in Malta) to Alexandria, crossing overland a short section through the Isthmus of Suez, and continuing the journey with another vessel through the Red Sea towards the Indian Ocean to Bombay/Mumbai. The second possibility was to reach India only by steamship, circumnavigating Africa and passing south of Cape Town.[460] After approximately 1830, the option for a route via Suez prevailed.[461] For travel from London to Alexandria and Suez, initially the route via Marseille was chosen as the most convenient option.[462] After this postal connection was established in 1837 (or, according to other sources, 1835), mail was sent once every month, and transporting it to Bombay took one month.

For a decade or two thereafter, the British postal authorities conducted a number of studies on the quickest possible route by which to cross the continent and the Mediterranean. Along with the route via Marseille, they considered transferring mail via Trieste in order to shorten the sea route.[463] In 1847 the British postal services also looked into sending the mail via one of Southern Italy's ports, but there was no railway connection yet.[464] This option materialized at a later stage, when, shortly after the unification of Italy in 1861, construction started on a railway line connecting the newly founded kingdom from north to south. Further on, there was no alternative to the route via Alexandria, the Isthmus of Suez, and through the Red Sea. The completion of the Suez Canal in 1869 only facilitated a connection that operated for several decades. Leandre Le Gay benefited from exactly these possibilities during his service in Jeddah in 1870–1874—certainly the connection by steamship took time, but it was regular.

In the era of steam navigation, the idea of carrying Indian mail via the Balkans first arose in a proposal to transport it by rail to Salonica. Salonica was discussed as an option for a main port that Austria and Germany could use in their commerce directed toward Egypt, the Eastern Mediterranean and India; in theory the port of Salonica would offer them better conditions than

460 BPMA, Post 29/26, files II, III, IV and VI.

461 BPMA, Post 29/26, file VIII.

462 BPMA, Post 29/27 file XXXVII.

463 BPMA, Post 27/47 A, files V and XI.

464 BPMA, Post 27/47 A, file XIV.

the existing routes via the Danube, as well via Trieste.[465] On a larger European scale, the route via Salonica was considered a potential rival of the route via Brindisi—for the London-Alexandria mail route, the Salonica option meant traveling 622 kilometers more by land but 400 kilometers less by sea, which would shorten the overall time.[466] As we have seen, Salonica was connected with the European railway network only in 1889, several decades after the other main ports on the northern shores of the Mediterranean that provided a steamship connection to Alexandria, but even after that, the route via Salonica did not become a preferred option for Western European postal authorities.

Even more attractive from the German point of view was the idea to build a railway line crossing the Balkans and Anatolia and continuing towards India. This project sought to counterbalance the influence of both Russia and Great Britain.[467] In practice, the construction of railways in Anatolia lagged behind that of the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire,[468] and the line from Constantinople reached Ankara and Konya in 1892 and 1896, respectively (the "Anatolian Railway"). The extension of the line from Konya to Baghdad, known as the Baghdad Railway, started in 1903 but was not finished until after World War I. Then, after a long interruption, the line via Konya, Adana, and Aleppo to Baghdad was completed only in 1940. In the early twentieth century the Ottoman authorities had very different priorities. In 1900–1908 they built a line from Damascus to Medina—the Hejaz railway. This line had undeniable strategic importance. It facilitated control over the remote provinces in the Arabian peninsula, but more importantly, it was an element of the pan-Islamist policies of Sultan Abdulhamid II—rapid and secure travel to the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina helped to legitimize the Ottoman sultan as a dedicated caliph of all Muslims. On the whole, the lack of finished railways in the interior of Anatolia and the Middle East meant that steamship transportation towards these regions continued to predominate for several decades longer than it did in the Balkans.

Thus for almost a century, the postal route to India via Suez remained the most important transport artery "between Europe and Asia." Several port cities in the Eastern Mediterranean also profited from the intensive and well-organized postal connections with India, because they had no other direct mail connection to Western Europe. That was the case primarily of Alexandria

465 Dehn, *L'Allemagne et les Chemins orientaux*, 12; Lyde and Mockler-Ferryman, *A Military Geography of the Balkan Peninsula*, 27.

466 Wirth, *Der Balkan*, 369–370.

467 Dehn, *L'Allemagne et les Chemins orientaux*, 11.

468 Crousse, *La péninsule gréco-slave*, 352.

itself, which served as a transit point in the postal exchange with India, while there were very few letters from or for Egypt.[469] From Alexandria, mail was transferred to various places in the Eastern Mediterranean, and data from 1865–1866 testify that mail was even transported between London and Constantinople via Alexandria.[470] After Cyprus came under British control in 1878, postal connections with the island also went via Alexandria: in 1878 the Bells Asia Minor Steamship Company started to operate a once-a-week mail service between Cyprus and Alexandria, and the connection on to London was realized thanks to the postal connection with India via Brindisi. Timetables from 1883 and 1884 show that the same company provided a postal connection between Alexandria and Limasol (plus Larnaca) twice a week, which took one-and-a-half days.[471]

Beirut also benefited from the Indian mail through a connection via Alexandria.[472] In turn, Beirut served as a port for the major Syrian cities in the interior—Damascus and Aleppo.[473] The 110-kilometer road between Beirut and Damascus was built in 1857–1863, and in the early 1860s a private company started regular transportation with carriages between the two cities, which took thirteen hours instead of (as previously) three days; the construction of the Beirut-Damascus railway started in the late 1880s and was completed in 1895.[474] A major new improvement took place after World War I under colonial administration: the "Desert Motor Route" to Baghdad via Damascus was created, providing the most rapid and convenient way to reach Iraq. The establishment of airmail postal service to Baghdad, and then also to Karachi in the late 1920s, made the postal connection considerably faster.[475] Moreover, airmail, at least for letters and postcards, was not that expensive. For example, a letter to Iraq sent surface mail cost two-and-a-half pennies, and by airmail it was three pennies (per half-ounce); sending a postcard cost one-and-a-half and two pennies, respectively.[476] It should be noted that all these connections bypassed

469 BPMA, Post 29/27, file XXV.

470 BPMA, Post 29/130 C, file IV.

471 BPMA, Post 29/345 C.

472 BPMA, Post 29/294 A.

473 BPMA, Post 29/163 B, files I, II, III, IV.

474 Arnaud, "Tradition and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century. Modernization of the Cities of the Ottoman Empire (1800–1920)," 954; Paul Dumont, "Salonica and Beirut: The Reshaping of Two Ottoman Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean*, eds. Kaser and Ginio, 190.

475 BPMA, Post 33/805.

476 BPMA, Post 33/3800, file 35.

both the Balkans and Anatolia and were, in fact, extensions of the steamship lines crossing the Mediterranean.

Still, the progress of railway construction in Turkey in the direction of Syria and Iraq provided tangible results in the 1930s. Data from September 1937 show that mail was transferred three times a week in Istanbul from the Simplon Orient Express to the Taurus Express to Syria, and then the mail was transported on to Iraq by car; the time needed to get between Istanbul and Baghdad was about three days and six hours.[477] In this way, even before the Baghdad railway was completed (the last missing section was between Nusaybin and Kirkuk), the overland route across the Balkans and Anatolia finally achieved a certain advantage vis-à-vis the steamship lines from Marseille, Napoli, Brindisi, and so on.

In theory, along with Syria and Iraq, Iran (until 1935 Persia) was the third country in the Middle East that could be most rapidly reached by a surface route crossing the Balkans and Anatolia. In practical terms, the conditions for such an overland postal connection materialized at a very late stage, due to the delayed construction of the railway lines in Eastern Turkey and in Iran itself. In fact, the two countries are connected by a single railway line, completed only in 1977. Poor roads in Eastern Anatolia and Iran, as well as the substandard operation of the postal services in both countries, posed further obstacles for this route.

Therefore, it is not surprising that postal connections from Western Europe to Persia relied on other routes. Until 1904, all mail from Great Britain to Persia was sent via Bombay (with the mail for India) and then again by sea to Persia.[478] At that point the British postal authorities started to discuss a second possibility—to send the mail via Germany or Sweden and then onward via Russia, which already had a postal agreement with Persia.[479] In 1908 German postal services started to use this opportunity,[480] and in 1909 the British followed them in sending mail to Persia via Germany and Russia.[481] Instructions from January 12, 1909, show how this new route was to be combined with the existing one: "Transport in Persia being slow and difficult, it is recommended that parcels for the south of Persia be sent by the service via India, and parcels for the north be sent by the service via Russia."[482] This practice was followed in

477 BPMA, Post 33/3800, file 27.
478 BPMA, Post 29/1002, file I.
479 BPMA, Post 29/1002, file IV.
480 BPMA, Post 29/1002, file V.
481 BPMA, Post 29/1002, file VI.
482 BPMA, Post 29/1002, file VII.

subsequent years, including after World War I, despite the fact that in the interwar period, the British were disturbed by some incidents in which the mail bags were opened by the Soviet postal authorities.[483]

The British had previously transferred mail to Persia via Bombay, but in the 1920s they found a better option. Improved connections to Baghdad offered the possibility to transfer mail directly to Persia.[484] In practical terms, it was mostly cities in western Persia, located near the Iraqi border, that benefited from this new opportunity.[485] Finally, in the late 1930s, mail to Iran also started to be transported by the route of the Simplon Orient Express and Taurus Express; nevertheless, connections via Marseille and Brindisi also remained in use.[486]

In fact, postal connections from Europe to Iran during the early twentieth century recall the situation in the Balkans in the early 1880s, when mail from Western Europe was transported to Greece via Brindisi, to Montenegro via Trieste, to Western Bulgaria by the Austro-Hungarian services, to Eastern Bulgaria from Romania, and so on. Similarly, because of the difficult connections in the Iranian interior, mail was sent by different routes to various points at the country's margins: first by sea through the Persian Gulf, then also by the surface route via Russia from the north, a bit later by a faster surface route from the west through Iraq, and finally also by another surface route via Turkey. For people in the interior of Iran, postal connections with the outside world were difficult in any case, but that was due mainly to the country's own poor infrastructure.

Finally, in 1939 the railway connection to Syria and Iraq via Turkey turned out to be faster than the other options.[487] Thus the Balkans started to be used as a "bridge" for the postal connections between Europe and several countries in the Near East. With the outbreak of World War II, it became clear that part of the postal traffic in this direction was already channeled through the Balkans: when the Simplon Orient Express ceased operations in May 1940, alternative routes had to be sought, because this train carried "mails for the Balkans, Iraq, Iran and Syria and for the Far East via Siberia."[488]

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483 BPMA, Post 1463 A, file XI; Post 29/1003, file XL; Post 33/3800, file 18.

484 BPMA, Post 29/1003, file XXXIV.

485 BPMA, Post 33/2906, file XXX.

486 BPMA, Post 33/3803 A, file 72.

487 BPMA, Post 33/3803, file 58.

488 BPMA, Post 33/3803 A, file not numbered.

The history of transport and communications brings into question the perception of the Balkans as a clearly defined spatial unit in the European Southeast and a transitional area from Europe to Asia Minor and the Middle East. By contrast, profound transformations took place precisely during the period when the Balkans most clearly appear as a well-defined region with its specific problematic—the nineteenth and early twentieth century. That has nothing to do with the generalizations about the region as a hybrid and heterogeneous area located "between East and West"—these are changes that can be easily and precisely traced both chronologically and spatially. Let me briefly summarize them.

The advent of steam navigation almost turned the Balkans into an island: one could reach them most rapidly, cheaply, and safely by water. Despite the fact that the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire were geographically located closer to Central and Western Europe, for much of the nineteenth century (especially from the 1830s until at least the 1880s) it was the big port cities that benefited from a faster and more regular connection with the Western world, regardless of whether these port cities were located in the Balkans or elsewhere in the Eastern Mediterranean. That confirms one of the conclusions of the overview of Ottoman urban history: thanks to steam navigation, major port cities in the Eastern Mediterranean like Izmir, Beirut, Haifa, and Alexandria became "closer" to the European capitals, for all practical purposes, than the towns in the interior of the Balkans, and of course those in the interior of Anatolia and the Near East. In the decades before the construction of the railway lines, only the Danube offered better opportunities for travel, transport, and postal services to the adjacent parts of the Balkans; after the 1880s this waterway no longer offered competitively fast connections for either the post or for travelers. It is true that transport by sea was important for the region both before the 1830s and after the 1880s, but during this period it dominated in an unprecedented way.

During the half-century between the introduction of steam navigation and the construction of the trans-Balkan railway lines, overland post retained some of its importance for connecting the Ottoman provinces with Central Europe, but not with Western Europe. The Austrian postal authorities continued to use the overland postal connection via Belgrade, Sofia, and Edirne, but even in this case this route was used only for letters, while steamships were preferred for passenger travel and transporting goods. The Ottoman authorities relied mostly on overland connections, especially for the needs of their own administration. Otherwise the Balkan interior remained difficult to reach, which was frustrating in comparison to the new possibilities enjoyed in port cities.

The turning point that brought the major cities of the Balkans "closer" to Europe was the construction of the railway lines that were substantially faster

than water transport. When possible, even port cities started to rely on trains for faster connections. This turn took place several decades later than in the more developed countries of Western and Central Europe. Actually, the first few railways in the Ottoman Empire were built in the 1850s and 1860s on the initiative of foreign companies and were effectively appendages to waterways. They linked some big ports like Izmir or Salonica with their nearest hinterland or were relatively short lines linking two ports and thus shortening water routes (Cernavodă-Constanța, Ruse-Varna). Only later came the breakthrough of the line between Central Europe and Constantinople (with a branch to Salonica), completed in the late 1880s. Finally, the construction of the major strategic lines in the Asian part of the Ottoman Empire (the Baghdad and the Hejaz railways) started after 1900.

Surprisingly at first glance, the first railway lines that reduced the time it took for a letter from Western Europe to reach Constantinople were those to the port cities of Marseille (1852), Trieste (1857), Brindisi (1865), and Odessa (1865). The next major and more important improvement was the completion in 1869–1879 of the main railway lines crossing Romania. They considerably sped up the connections with the Ottoman capital, as well as with many larger cities in the Eastern Balkans, including the new Principality of Bulgaria after 1878; the Orient Express started running for the first time in 1883 using the Romanian lines.

The most important step was the construction of the direct railway line to Constantinople via Belgrade and Sofia, completed in 1888 (plus the branch from Niš to Salonica that was finished in 1889). The trans-Balkan line was even more important for the region, given the bad roads in the Ottoman provinces. The railway via Belgrade (either by the Orient Express or by other trains on the same line) became the permanent means to transport mail to and from Constantinople, as well as to Serbia, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman provinces in Thrace and Macedonia. Only at the end of World War I was the Salonica-Athens railway completed; it soon became the preferred connection between the Greek capital and Europe. Thus in the 1920s, rail connections prevailed over steam navigation, even in the case of the Greek postal services. Several regions along the Adriatic coast (the Ionian Islands, Albania, Montenegro, and some Dalmatian towns) were the last territories in the region that continued to connect to Western Europe by sea and then by the Italian railways. In other words, railway connections replaced water connections in the Balkans gradually from north to south and southeast, with more delay for the extreme south and even greater delay for some of the westernmost parts of the region.

As a whole, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Balkans had a clear advantage over Anatolia concerning connections by land.

This was an era when the Balkans and Anatolia could no longer be regarded (only) as "twins" in the "core regions" of the Ottoman Empire.[489] Concerning modern means of transport, the Balkans became a "bridge" between Europe and Asia at a relatively late stage, only in the interwar period, and only partially: for Anatolia, for part of the traffic to Syria and Iraq, and (in only some cases) to Iran. The fact that routes went through the Mediterranean and avoided the Balkans was due not only to the poor quality of the network within the Balkans but also to the even greater delay in building railways (and good roads) in Anatolia. Moreover, for most of the interwar period, Turkey apparently lagged behind Syria and Iraq (under French and British control, respectively) in terms of speed of transport and communications.

The transition from steam navigation to railway connections as the fastest means of transport points up the differing roles that water surfaces could play—facilitating transportation in the former case but creating a barrier in the latter one. This phenomenon demonstrates that there is no definitive answer to whether water "separates" or "connects" territories when it comes to defining historical regions: the question must be addressed on a case-by-case basis. For instance, until the early nineteenth century the Lower Danube was primarily an obstacle, and even tradesmen who followed this path used the routes along the river more often than the river itself. After the mid-1830s steam navigation transformed the Danube into the most convenient transport route in the interior of the region, but later, with the advent of railways in the Balkans, the need to build bridges over the Danube became more important than the regulation works on the river or the modernization of its port facilities.

The transformation brought by steam navigation and especially by railways was substantial, but it was not comprehensive. Not only were major railway lines in the Balkans constructed with a considerable delay, but trains traveled much more slowly and infrequently. Another very important problem was the poorly developed rail network (aside from the few main lines)—studies on economic history often underline this shortcoming, but given the poor roads, that was also a problem for traveling and postal services. Even after the railway network in the region was constructed, the Balkans lagged considerably

489 Certainly, there were other examples of the widening gap in modernization between the Balkans and Anatolia in this era. In his contribution to the present volume, Andreas Lyberatos emphasizes that there was a visible imbalance in the diffusion of clock towers in the Balkans and Anatolia. Still, the advantage of the Balkans in this regard should not be generalized. For instance, Ami Boué was surprised that in European Turkey, there were public clocks in every town and even in big villages, while in the Principality of Serbia there were only two: Boué, *Turquie d'Europe*, vol. 2, 315.

behind Central and Western Europe in terms of density and regularity of connections. Poor transport connections within the individual countries often made irrelevant the relatively fast connection to the great centers abroad: sending a letter or a parcel within the Balkan countries could take so long that it canceled out the time saved by technical innovations and improvements on the international routes. The paradox is that in many cases the "remoteness" of the Balkans from Western and Central Europe appears to be an internal problem of the countries and the societies within the region.

The implementation of technical innovations in transport and communication required considerable investment and depended on the political will of the state authorities. In practice the states in the region organized and controlled the process and did not hesitate to monopolize the new means of transport and communication and to impose all kind of restrictions. In many cases the delays in and even the impossibility of contact with the outside world were due to the control Balkan state authorities wielded over foreign postal services, as well as over their own subjects. In other words, most of the problems resulted not only from technological and economic backwardness but also from deliberate political measures.

State ownership and control also reflected on connections between the individual Balkan states—autarkic national states that developed transport infrastructure mostly for their own needs. As a side effect, their transport networks were poorly connected with one another. This is true of both railway and road networks; they were almost always developed to connect the major cities within each individual country, while cross-border connections were neglected. Poor connections between the individual Balkan states once again oblige us to take seriously the old and much-criticized cliché about "Balkanization," which obviously is not limited to the political map. On several occasions I have insisted that many shortcomings in Balkan studies have resulted from the tradition of studying the region on a country-by-country basis, but the history of transport and communications suggests that this approach largely reflects the reality in the region for most of the twentieth century.

General Conclusions

The Balkans as a region are usually discussed in relation to what geographers recognize as the "Balkan peninsula." However, they historically derive from European Turkey in its borders from the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In fact, before the nineteenth century, this territory was not seen as a peninsula at all. Only then did scholars start to speak of it as a "peninsula," and

many different names were proposed, paralleled by a debate over its delineation from the rest of the continent.

The notion of "European Turkey" itself owes its existence primarily to the concept of Europe as a separate continent. The borders of this "continent" crossed through the Ottoman Empire, and thus its territories were subdivided into "European," "Asian," and "African," first on the geographical maps, and later, more importantly, in political thought and action. The European part of the Ottoman Empire gradually became also a legitimate research object distinct from the Near East and the Orient.

The delineation of the Balkans from "Asia" and "the Orient" is rarely discussed in Balkan studies because the continental division is taken for granted. As a consequence, experts in Balkan studies are often willing to take into account "the larger European context" of Balkan history but tend to ignore developments in neighboring "Asian" territories, even for periods when they were under identical political conditions. Still, the "border between Europe and Asia" is certainly not a fact of physical geography. At the same time, we cannot disregard this "border" as a pure fiction, because the cartographical line became a powerful political concept and had important consequences. The continental division might be more accurately seen as a historical development than as a pre-existing fact of geography. The "making" of Europe as a continent in its present-day meaning had a crucial impact on the emergence of "the Balkans" as a region distinct from "the Orient."

The case study on the "Balkan city" illustrated to what extent the conventionally accepted continental division might lead to misinterpretations. The borders of the region do not coincide with the diffusion of the realia and phenomena considered specifically Balkan, and that concerns precisely the "border between Europe and Asia." More importantly, these "Balkan" realia are in fact "Ottoman," "Oriental," and even "Islamic" and "Turkish." In all such cases, it is not the Balkans that were spreading into Anatolia and "the Orient" but rather "the Orient" that was spreading into the Balkans. The analysis of the secondary literature demonstrated that the perception of the designation "Balkan" as different from "Oriental" is an academic construct. Traditionally it was seen simply (and much more correctly) as a synonym and regional variation. For this reason, Balkan studies not only narrowed the spatial scope of its academic interest to "European" territories but also extended its chronological scope back to the earliest times, which helped it to "discover" the medieval and ancient roots of Balkan civilization.

A far more often debated question regarding the definition of the Balkans as a region is the delineation of the Balkans from the rest of the European

continent. The stable southeastern border of the Habsburg Empire for most of the eighteenth and nineteenth century (until 1878) was sufficient to lay the basis for a relatively clear divide between the (post-)Ottoman, "Oriental(ized)" or "Balkan" area and the rest of ("Christian," "civilized") Europe. Still, there were a number of open questions, the most important deriving from the fact that twentieth-century political borders do not coincide with the previous imperial borders. The most important consequence is that studies treating Romania and the former Yugoslavia as Balkan countries inevitably include a larger area and address a more complex problematic than "European Turkey" and the post-Ottoman space in Europe. The uncertainties about the northern boundary of the Balkans/Southeastern Europe were recently used as an argument in favor of studying the region in the larger European context.

The case study on postal geography presented here demonstrated that the questions related to the place of the Balkans vis-à-vis the rest of the continent cannot be reduced to a debate over the boundary between them. Even the geographical proximity of the Balkans to Central and Western Europe could not be considered a constant. Needless to say, contacts between the region and the rest of Europe were difficult until the beginning of the nineteenth century, and significant improvements came only with the new means of transport at the time of the Industrial Revolution in Europe. Regular and easier contacts were first established by steam navigation, starting from the 1830s, and thus the big port cities were the first to have improved access to Europe. Exactly at the time when the region started to be widely designated as a "peninsula" was when, in terms of travel and transport connections, it began to resemble an *insula*. Only after the 1870s and 1880s did railways make overland connections faster (if not fast enough by Western European standards) and more convenient, allowing the Balkans to benefit from belonging to the European landmass.

The fragmentation of the European possessions of the Ottoman Empire into small states was highly significant in several ways. As is widely recognized, this process made the name "European Turkey" inadequate for the area as a whole. Actually, the perception of these provinces as "European" territories included in "Turkey" (an "Asian" empire) contributed to the secession of the Balkan states before the disintegration of the other multinational empires in Eastern Europe and before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire itself.

Political fragmentation—later called "Balkanization"— also became one of the characteristics of the region. More importantly, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire led to a reformulation of the object of study of those interested in the Balkans and their past. The studies on the region started with studies of "European Turkey"; after the secession of the first Balkan states,

these included European Turkey plus its successor states. And after World War I, these most often included only the successor states and omitted the last remaining piece of "European Turkey" in Eastern Thrace.

The establishment of the new states also influenced the way scholars defined the area of "the Balkans," which has very often been as the aggregate of the "Balkan states." Thus on several occasions, the borders of these states redefined the borders of the region—the most important change was caused by the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire. It must be underlined that not only "the Balkans" but also "Southeastern Europe" include the relatively small states in the area but not territories that were included in Russia / the USSR; until 1918 the same was true of territories included in the Habsburg Empire. Balkan studies and Southeast European studies are disciplines dealing with these small states and their pasts, omitting the possessions of the major neighboring powers.

After the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the Balkans became a space composed of different states with limited contacts with their immediate neighbors (as also demonstrated in the case study on postal geography). Thus it has gradually become more and more justified to study the states in the region separately, amplifying the problem of how to pursue studies on the region's distant past. In addition, fragmentation permeates Balkan studies itself—there are a number of national schools with different agendas in studying the region, and in every country the region is seen from a different angle.

While political borders played an important role in defining the borders of "the Balkans," seeing the territories of European Turkey as a "peninsula" had only a limited impact on the definition of the region's spatial scope. At a relatively early stage, the Danube was accepted as a northern border of the peninsula, but Wallachia and Moldavia, as well as Romania, are included in the vast majority of works on Balkan history. After 1878 Bosnia and Herzegovina (occupied by Austria-Hungary) disappeared from most works about the Balkans and reappeared in them after 1918, along with Transylvania, all of Croatia, and even Slovenia. After 1991 Slovenia once again disappeared from works on the contemporary Balkans. Dalmatia started to be considered part of the region, not so much because it was located south of the Danube-Sava line but mainly because it was part of Yugoslavia. The territorial scope of the Balkans (and Southeastern Europe) has been changing mostly based on the redrawing of political borders. Actually, the political borders on the Danube-Sava line were recognized as the northern boundary of the "peninsula."

Yet the conceptualization of the Balkans as a peninsula had another, much more important consequence. Despite the uncertainties about the northern

border, the region now appeared as a fact of physical geography, and that justified the ambitions to write a history of the Balkans "from the earliest times to the present day." From this perspective, Ottoman rule ("European Turkey") appeared as a late episode in a millennia-long history. Another related problem is that the concept of the Balkans as a peninsula—and as a fixed object of study—implies the existence of permanent borders. That contradicts the need to take into account changing and fluid borders and to look for a spatial framework relevant for the specific period of time and/or problematic. Such flexibility is achievable in studies with a clear focus but difficult for general works on the "history of the Balkans" covering long periods of time.

Our understanding of the Balkans could benefit from the discussions about alternative regional divisions of these territories. The parallel notion of Southeastern Europe is the most discussed, but in fact it adds little beyond the possibility of conceiving of a transitional zone between the Balkans proper and the rest of the continent instead of one single border. Otherwise, Southeast European studies examines the same problems as Balkan studies on a slightly larger territory with more of the Habsburg provinces, namely the lands of the Hungarian crown.

Two larger frameworks easily come to mind: to study the Balkans in the larger framework of European history, as so many scholars insist, or, as a few voices have recently advocated, to study the Balkans together with the Near/Middle East, or at least with Anatolia. Actually, the Balkans might be seen as the area of intersection between the two: on the one hand, by being an integral part of the Ottoman Empire (and moreover of its "core regions"), and thus of the Near East and "the Orient," bearing the legacy of the Eastern Roman Empire and Eastern Christianity, but on the other, being part of the European continent—first geographically and later also politically. Again these two larger frameworks need to be seen in time—not only the Ottoman Empire and Byzantium but also Europe is a phenomenon of history, not of geography. In addition, the case study on postal services demonstrated that, despite its location "between Europe and Asia," the Balkans does not always serve as a bridge between them.

The overview of urban history and urban culture also provided a different perspective on the problem of the center of the Balkan space. Traditionally studies of the Balkans start by drawing the borders of the region and only then look for its center or centers. However, historically it was the big imperial capital that shaped a region around itself. Constantinople was the metropolis of "the Balkans," but not only of the Balkans. The analysis of the urban history of the region invites one to think in a Balkan-Anatolian perspective open to the Orient as a whole. Obviously this approach is justified for the Ottoman period

(and largely the pre-Ottoman period, for Byzantine times) but later is relevant mostly for understanding the historical legacies in a rapidly changing area. At the same time, the crucial role played by the imperial capital in shaping the region also means that the Balkans could not be regarded as a mere extension of "the Orient."

The concepts of the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, and the Black Sea region could be helpful in two regards. First and most importantly, they question the assumption that the seas surrounding the Balkans delineated the region. Those who were tired of the endless and fruitless debates about "the borders of the Balkans" were actually tired of the discussions about just one border—the northern one. But if the seas surrounding the Balkans could be regarded as the unifying elements of respective regions, then the question about the boundaries of the Balkan region becomes incomparably more complex. Second, the concepts of the Mediterranean, Adriatic, and the Black Sea region are interrelated with some of the major internal divisions of the Balkan area: the role of the Adriatic is relevant for the Western Balkans, and the Black Sea region is relevant for the Eastern Balkans, while (Southern) Greece is often regarded as a Mediterranean country.

The overview of postal services gave us one more perspective on the place of the Balkans and its parts in a larger context. On the whole, modern transport infrastructure does not serve the Balkans as one space—it serves the individual countries and the major cities in the region and their connections to the big centers outside the region. That corresponds to a more general observation: the entangled histories of the Balkans are very often entangled with the outside world. In the course of our work on *Entangled Balkans*, often my colleagues and I were not able to discover entanglements between the individual Balkan countries and nations, and connections directly pointed outside the region. At first glance, it was frustrating for an ambitious study on the "entangled histories of the Balkans," but in fact it reveals much about the history of the region. We cannot understand the history of the individual Balkan countries without taking into account various interactions with their neighbors. At the same time, however, we cannot limit ourselves to "the Balkans" or look for a larger context in only one bigger area, be it "Europe," "the Mediterranean," or the "Middle East."

CHAPTER 4

Time and Timekeeping in the Balkans: Representations and Realities

Andreas Lyberatos

> *We were perfectly well aware that in all Constantinople there is not a minaret upon which, punctual as clockwork, the messenger of the Prophet does not appear at his appointed hour;* [. . .] *Watch in hand, I stood waiting with lively curiosity the stroke of the hour, glancing now at the minute-hand, now at the small doorway opening out on the gallery of the minaret, about as high from the ground as the fourth story of an ordinary house. Presently the minute-hand reaches the sixtieth little black speck: no one appeared. "He is not there," said I.—"There he is," replied Yunk; and, true enough, there he stood.*
>
> EDMONDO DE AMICIS, *Constantinople*[1]

From a world-history perspective, the invention and technical evolution of the mechanical clock is unambiguously the most significant development in the history of timekeeping and one of the major advances in the history of technology. The absence of a named, "attested" inventor and the long process of incubation and early evolution of the invention, which goes back to the Late Middle Ages and was diffused geographically throughout Western and Central Europe, make a nationalist reading of its history untenable.[2] Nonetheless, the invention and diffusion of the clock was one of the developments that fostered Europe's technological lead and world hegemony and shaped a distinctive

* I am grateful to Prof Stephanos Pesmazoglou for reading carefully through an earlier version of the paper and making valuable remarks and corrections.

1 E. de Amicis, *Constantinople* (New York and London, 1896), 109.

2 For the early history of the clock, see D. Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Harvard University Press, 1983).

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modern European ("civilized") culture.[3] Consequently, the history of the clock, the timekeeping practices associated with it, and the social and cultural impact of the diffusion of its use have been studied and theorized mainly with reference to Western and Central European societies.[4]

Several critiques of epistemological Eurocentrism in the study of timekeeping and time perception have been or can be deployed. First, important studies of the history of technology argued that the very invention of the clock was an outcome of the evolution of astronomical observation, that is, clock's invention is part of a broader history based on Eastern ancient and medieval civilizations.[5] Second, critical accounts in the field of social anthropology have challenged the rigid dichotomies of "pre-modern/modern" and "European/non-European" time perception associated with the diffusion of the use of the clock.[6] Furthermore, the tendency of anthropological scholarship to place non-Western societies in a state of a past (and backward) temporality, as well as the cultural-relativist approaches of post-Durkheimian anthropologists and other social scientists that purport a metaphysically distinct, alien sense of time and temporal categories in "primitive" societies,

3 "The clock, not the steam-engine, is the key-machine of the modern industrial age," asserted one of the pioneers of the social history of technology back in 1934: L. Mumford, *Technics and Civilization* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1934), 14.

4 The relevant literature is vast. See, among others, J. Le Goff, "Au moyen age: temps de leglise et temps du marchand," *Annales ESC* 15, no. 3 (1960): 417–433; J. Le Goff, "Le temps du travail dans la 'crise' du XVI^{e} siècle: du temps médiéval au temps modern," *Le moyen age* 69 (1963): 597–613; C. Cipolla, *Clocks and Culture 1300–1700* (London: Walker & Company, 1967); E.P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present* 38 (December 1967): 56–97; E. Zerubavel, "The Standardization of Time: A Socio-Historical Perspective," *American Journal of Sociology* 88, no. 1 (1982): 1–23; D. Landes, *Revolution*; Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *Die Geschichte der Stunde: Uhren und Moderne Zeitordnungen* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1992); N. Elias, *Über die Zeit* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2004).

5 D.J. de Solla Price, "On the Origin of the Clockwork, Perpetual Motion Devices and the Compass," *United States National Museum Bulletin*, no. 218 (1959): 81–112; J. Needham, W. Ling, and D.J. de Solla Price, *Heavenly Clockwork: The Great Astronomical Clocks of Medieval China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960). For a critique of these views, see D. Landes, *Revolution in Time*.

6 B. Adam, "Perceptions of Time," in *Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, ed. T. Ingold (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 503–526; B. Adam, *Timewatch: The Social Analysis of Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 12–42. For a detailed study with similar challenges from a historical point of view, see P. Glennie and N. Thrift, *Shaping the Day: A History of Timekeeping in England and Wales, 1300–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

have been subjected to well-founded and plausible criticisms.[7] Finally, recent approaches in the history of technology, informed by post-colonial theory, have stressed the Eurocentric bias of technology history narratives that focus on innovation (and the innovative personality) and neglect the history of technology-in-use.[8]

The history of the use of the clock and the clock-based timekeeping systems (clock time) and time-reckoning practices, which, over time, largely replaced previous systems and practices, is simultaneously a global, transnational, and connected history par excellence. Whether seen as a process of cultural transfer or, in other terms and contexts, as a process of colonization, this story cannot be told unless the experience of non-Western societies is taken seriously into consideration.[9] This experience constitutes the node at which different histories intersect. One is the history of transfer of objects of material culture and the timekeeping system associated with them. Another is the history of the diffusion and prevalence of normative discourses on time use associated with the mechanical time-keepers, which has far-reaching consequences for the construction of representations, self-representations, and stereotypes. Still another is the history of the socio-cultural transformation of non-Western societies and its temporal dimensions.

The Balkan region has largely been left out of this global history, in terms of both empirical research and theoretical inquiry. Generalizing assertions—such as those of Traian Stoianovich, who pointed to the absence in the Balkan peninsula between 1400 and 1800 of a new (i.e., modern) temporal and spatial perspective (unlike the Italian peninsula, which possessed both, and the Iberian, which lacked the temporal one)—are based on insufficient empirical research

7 J. Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); A. Gell, *The Anthropology of Time: Cultural Constructions of Temporal Maps and Images* (Oxford and Washington, DC: Berg, 1992).

8 D. Edgerton, "From Innovation to Use: Ten (Eclectic) Theses on the History of Technology," *History and Technology* 16 (1999): 1–26; D. Edgerton, *The Shock of the Old: Technology and Global History since 1900* (London: Profile Books, 2008); D. Arnold, "Europe, Colonialism and Technology in the 20th Century," *History and Technology* 21, no. 1 (2005): 85–106.

9 A. Lyberatos, "Clocks, Watches and Time Perception in the Balkans: Studying a Case of Cultural Transfer," in *Encounters in Europe's Southeast: The Habsburg Empire and the Orthodox World in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, eds. H. Heppner and E. Posch (Bochum: Winkler, 2012), 233–235; G. Nanni, *The Colonization of Time: Ritual, Routine and Resistance in the British Empire* (*Studies in Imperialism*) (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012); cf. J. Postill, "Clock and Calendar Time: A Missing Anthropological Problem," *Time and Society* 11, nos. 2–3 (2002): 251–270; V. Ogle, *The Global Transformation of Time, 1870–1950* (Cambridge Massachussets: Harvard University Press, 2015).

and draw heavily on ambiguous theoretical distinctions and the epistemologically challengeable premises of "ethno-psychology."[10] Furthermore, the few existing empirical inquiries into the spread of clock-timekeeping in the region, which do not make similar claims of depicting "Balkan civilization" *in toto*, usually share a Eurocentric bias and focus heavily on the symbolic dimensions of the use of the clock/watch in the region as a passport and marker of "European identity," without any discussion of how, to what degree, and with what implications this temporal "Europeanization" took place.[11]

I have elsewhere proposed a methodological approach to the study of the phenomenon of cultural transfer of timekeeping devices, systems, practices, and discourses from Central and Western Europe to the Balkans, and I will briefly come back to that at the end of this text.[12] The purpose of the present study is to contribute to the above research agenda by critically utilizing an important, already widely used type of source: the accounts of various Western and Central European travelers in the Balkans.[13] The significance of these accounts is basically twofold. On the one hand, these accounts may contain important information on the actual timekeeping and time-reckoning practices in the Balkans, passed on by people whose "outsider" position and point of view often leads them to identify and record phenomena whose banality may well have caused them to go unnoticed and unrecorded in locally produced sources. They can thus function—provided they are critically approached—as evidence complementing locally produced sources, which are scarce, especially for earlier centuries. On the other hand, the accounts

10 Tr. Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds: The First and Last Europe* (New York and London: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), 247–252, esp. 251.

11 For more details, see A. Lyberatos, "Clocks," 231–236. Recent interesting and extremely valuable exceptions come from the field of Ottoman studies. See, e.g., A. Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks Alla Turca. Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015; Idem, "'Our Time': On the Durability of the Alaturca Hour System in the Late Ottoman Empire," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 16, nos. 1–2 (2010): 47–69; Fr. Georgeon and Fr. Hitzel, eds., *Les Ottomans et le temps*, The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage 49 (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

12 A. Lyberatos, "Clocks."

13 This article has been researched as part of the ongoing project "Greek History of Innovation" (ELISTOKAINO, Action KRIPIS, FP7/GSRT, 2012–2015) at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH (Rethymno, Greece). I owe thanks to the Director of the Institute Prof. Christos Hadziiossif for his support and to Mrs. Eleni Zerva, graduate student at the University of Crete, for helping me with data collection. The sample of travelogues researched is very large, yet the research has not yet exhausted the relevant literature. Therefore, the material presented offers a tentative and provisional account.

of these travelers, who usually came to the Balkans equipped with their personal mechanical timekeeping devices—fetishes of their technological and cultural superiority—contribute crucially to the construction of the region's temporal "difference." Alongside reporting timekeeping "realities," they apply various filters in their perception of timekeeping habits in the Balkans and create powerful representations of temporal otherness. These representations are instrumental for both the eventual prevalence in the region of European clock time and the timekeeping practices and discourses associated with it, as well as for the construction of mental maps and the cultural self-perceptions of its native inhabitants.[14]

Incompatible with the Clock: A Confusing Timekeeping System

Living mainly under Ottoman rule during the Early Modern and Modern period, the peoples of the Balkans shared an official—that is, state- and religiously sanctioned—hour system, which came to be known as the *alaturka* hour system. The night and the day were each divided into twelve-hours, counting with sunset and sunrise as starting points. Based on the varying duration of daylight and having starting points that changed day by day, this nature-bound system counted unequal hours in the different days and seasons of the year. There is nothing exceptionally Ottoman in this system. The duodecimal division of day and night was inherited by the Ottomans, and many other cultures, from ancient times, and the reckoning of unequal, seasonal hours was the rule everywhere before the invention of the mechanical clock. Similarly, counting from sunset—the beginning of the calendar day, according to Islam—was also practiced by the Byzantines before the Ottomans (*βυζαντινή ώρα*), as well as the Italians, thanks to whom the system of counting twenty-four hours from sunset became widely known as "Italian time." Informed and experienced travelers, such as the classical scholar Peter Edmund Laurent, who traveled

14 The role of travelers in the construction of Western perceptions and images of the Balkans has been extensively discussed in many works, in the wake of Edward Said's seminal *Orientalism*. See, among others, John B. Allcock, "Constructing the Balkans," in *Black Lambs and Grey Falcons: Women Traveling in the Balkans*, eds. John B. Allcock and Antonia Young (New York: Berghahn Books, 1991), 217–240; Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Vesna Goldsworty, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven, CT, 1998); K.E. Fleming, "Orientalism, The Balkans, and Balkan Historiography," *American Historical Review* 105, no. 4 (October 2000): 1218–1233.

in pre-revolutionary Greece, noticed the similarity: "The Turks reckon their hours from six in the morning to six in the evening, so that mid-day falls with them at six o'clock. This mode of reckoning time is, perhaps, in part derived from Italians, who reckon (at least, in the southern parts of Italy) from sun-set, twenty-four hours: by this means they have the extreme disadvantage of starting from a variable point; and it is only by a reference to their almanac that they can set their watch so as to give them twenty-four o'clock at sun-set. Our mode of keeping time is known in Naples by the name of 'ora di Francia,' or 'di Spagna.'"[15] The latter, i.e. the mode which eventually prevailed globally, was likewise known in the Ottoman Empire as *alafranga* (Frank/French) time and opposed to the *alaturka* (Turkish) time, both terms deriving from Italian. The above-noted similarity of the Ottoman with the Italian system was also reported by the Capuchin Robert de Dreux, who traveled through the Balkans as chaplain of the French ambassador in 1665–1669. Visiting Serres (Siroz), de Dreux expressed great surprise not only at finding a public clock there—something he mistakenly asserted was unique and prohibited everywhere else in Turkey—but also at the fact that this inelegant clock (lacking a dial) was loudly striking the hours according to the French and not the Italian system.[16] If we give credit to his report, this must be one of the earliest examples of public *alafranga* time reckoning in the Ottoman Empire, a quite peculiar fact, hardly explainable by reference to the type of clock mechanism incidentally brought to the Macedonian town.[17]

The invention and spread of the mechanical clock in Western and Central Europe, counting equal hours, gradually rendered the reckoning of unequal hours an obsolete practice. Yet it did not result in an equally easy adoption of the European hour system, which is more compatible with the mechanical

15 P.E. Laurent, *Recollections of a Classical Tour through Various Parts of Greece, Turkey and Italy, Made in the Years 1818 & 1819* (London: G. & W.B. Whittaker, 1821), 165.

16 See also another testimony, later, for the use of the Italian system in Wallachia: In Wallachia, Tsernitch, describing the inhabitants, mostly shepherds, states: "They reckon time from sunset to sunset, dividing each solar day into twenty-four ever-varying hours, the first of which commences with the sun's disappearence under the horizon, when they are consequently obliged to alter their clocks." C.B. Elliot M.A. F.R.S., vicar of Godalmin (late of the Bengal civil service), 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1839), 75.

17 R. de Dreux, *Voyage en Turquie et en Grèce du R.P. Robert de Dreux, aumônier de l'ambassadeur de France* (*1665–1669*) (Paris: Société d'édition "Les belles lettres," 1925), 93–94. Before de Dreux, Antoine Le Fèvre, visiting Plovdiv in 1611, also found a clock tower on one of the hills in the city that was striking the hours with the European system. B. Cvetkova, "Edin frenski pătepis za bălgarskite i balkanskite zemi ot XVII vek", *Izvestija na naučnija arhiv*, 4, 1968, p. 134.

clock and takes midnight and noon as its counting axes. The Italians preserved their "Italian time," which also spread beyond the Alps to Bohemia (the "Old Czech time"), officially until 1755 and unofficially in many places well after that, as P.E. Laurent also testified. Among the pioneers in clock-making and among the first to put public mechanical clocks in their cities, the Italians, for several centuries, accommodated the abovementioned leap by the famous "salto," that is, the adjustment of their clocks at sunset. In this way they preserved their religiously established (according to Judeo-Christian tradition) starting point of the calendar day and their more-attuned-to-nature system. Moreover, their system had the social advantage of publicly marking the end of daylight-regulated working time.[18]

Similarly to what happened in Italy, the diffusion of the mechanical clocks in the Ottoman Empire (a process that gained momentum in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) resulted in the adoption in the nineteenth century of an official *alaturka* system of equal clock hours to be counted from sunset. This development presupposed, in the Ottoman case as well, the gradual obsolescence of the older system of unequal hours and the time-reckoning practices associated with it. The calculation of these unequal hours and the reckoning of the times for pious Muslims' five daily prayers were traditionally entrusted to special astronomers/functionaries, members of the religious educated class (*ulema*) of the Empire, the *muvvakit*, literally those "who set the time."[19] The *muvvakit* were quartered in special "time-reckoning lodges," the *muvakkithane*, usually adjacent to major mosques in the capital, Istanbul, and other major cities of the Empire. They managed this timekeeping system through almanacs based on astronomical observation and the use of non-mechanical clocks (sundials, water clocks and sand clocks). Presumably, before the advent of the mechanical clock, the use of such non-mechanical clocks served time-reckoning needs in many contexts in the vast Empire, which could hardly be covered by the networks of the *muvakkit* astronomers. This fact naturally affected the punctuality of timekeeping, itself a function

18 For the resistance of the Italians to adopting "French time," see Gustav Bilfinger, *Die Mittelaltlicher Horen und die Modernen Stunden*. Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1892), 185–195.

19 The five daily prayer times (*namaz*) are a) *sabah namazı*, forty-five minutes after sunrise, b) *öyle namazı*, forty-five minutes after midday, c) *ikindi namazı*, midway between midday and sunset, d) *akşam namazı*, twenty minutes after sunset, and e) *yatsı namazı*, two hours after the *akşam namazı*. Fr. Hitzel, "De la clepsydre à l'horloge. L'art de mesurer le temps dans l'Empire Ottoman," in *Les Ottomans et le temps*, eds. Fr. Georgeon and Fr. Hitzel (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 15–16.

of the varying needs for social coordination. Time-vigilant and clock-obsessed observers of the nineteenth century noted varying experiences. Edmondo de Amicis, with a watch in his hand, checked and confirmed the clockwork punctuality of the *muezzin* of a mosque who called Muslims to prayer on the outskirts of Istanbul (see the opening quote). By contrast, Neofit Rilski measured with his watch and reported with disapproval the irregularity of timekeeping and service hours in the largest Bulgarian monastery of Rila.[20]

We will come back to the issue of punctuality. Yet Another important question concerning the transformation of the Ottoman hour is the religious functionaries' resistance or adaptation to the introduction of the clock and its equal hours. This issue has been pointed out by scholars who plausibly deny the calculation of the Muslim prayer hours as a major motive for the introduction of public clocks in many Ottoman cities of the Balkans. There is, however, evidence that mechanical clocks were gradually used, from the eighteenth century onwards, in mosques and *muvakkithanes* as auxiliary devices. The *muvakkithanes* in the first half of the nineteenth century were often equipped with fine clocks, and famous *muvakkit*, such as Ahmed Eflak Dede efendi, specialized in clock-making during the nineteenth century. Moreover, the Ottoman inscription on the clock tower of Shumla (Shumen) in Bulgaria (1740) shows that reckoning Muslim prayer hours has been stressed as a desirable function, at least as a means of overcoming religious resistance to the local introduction of a new device whose sounds evoke Christian customs. As we shall see below in detail, Eurocentric Orientalist or Balkan nationalist accounts often speak of the scarcity of clocks in the Ottoman Empire, attributing this "fact" to the Ottomans' rejection of Western technological advances. Contrary to these assertions, the Ottomans rather readily adopted the new mechanical timekeeping devices, whose use and spread resulted in the adoption of the official *alaturka* system of equal hours.

Despite the rather smooth adoption of the mechanical clock, the Ottomans (similarly to the Italians) preserved the *alaturka* system of counting hours from sunset for a long time, until the end of the Empire. The system was officially abolished, and the European hour system adopted, by the Westernizing leadership of the Turkish Republic in 1926. Prior to that, the successor nation-states of the Empire in the Balkans successively, when acquiring independence or autonomy, adopted the European time-system. Unlike the similar Italian precedent, the *alaturka* hour system was gradually endowed with Orientalist symbolism, both as a marker of exoticism and, above all, as a source of confusion, irregularity, and, consequently, backwardness. Interestingly, though not

20 Naučen Arhiv pri BAN, f.12k, op. 1, a.e. 1. For details, see A. Lyberatos, "Clocks," 252–253.

surprisingly, it seems that this image—which Western travelers, particularly British and Americans, were instrumental in constructing and conveying—was more clearly depicted late in the nineteenth century, when the peculiar "Italian time" and its legacy had been thoroughly "overcome" and the *alafranga* temporal orthodoxy was definitively adopted in all parts of civilized Europe. Thus Sir William Martin Leake, traveling in Epirus in the early nineteenth century, conveyed to his readers the feeling of inconvenience caused by Turkish time, "[...] as the watch cannot be kept correct without daily attention." Nonetheless, he warned against any idea of Turkish timekeeping exceptionalism: "It would seem, however, to be a natural mode of measuring time, being followed by so many nations. The Turkish method differs only from the Italian in dividing the day into two twelves, instead of reckoning to twenty-four; so that sunset is always twelve o' clock."[21]

A couple of decades later, the American missionary Rev. Josiah Brewer stated only that the *alaturka* system caused irregularity in the timepieces of the Turks and "much inconvenience to the foreigners."[22] Much later however, the English baroness Annie Brassey, traveling in the mid-1870s to the Mediterranean and visiting Constantinople, perceived Turkish time as "extremely puzzling." Explaining the *alaturka* system, she noted that it is "extremely difficult to keep your watch right and not be too late or too early for everything" and ascribed to this system the lack of clock synchronicity: "No two clocks or watches in the whole town are, I believe, exactly alike. The consequence was that on this particular day we were three-quarters of an hour too soon for our boat, and had to amuse ourselves by watching the motley crowd."[23] Along with the different calendar systems, Turkish time was an important component of Oriental confusion, as many Western observers complain. Again in the 1870s, Sir Hubert Jerningham speaks of this "hopeless puzzle" and the "difficulty of the Turks to change their hateful way of counting the hour by the time the sun sets": "Turkish time, sometimes means six o'clock; at others, nine o'clock, Frank time; and Feast-days like Christmas, New Year, and Easter, sometimes occur two and even three times in the year."[24] His example is repeated (and probably copied) by U.S. executive ambassador in Constantinople Samuel S. Cox, who more expressively pities the peoples of the Empire for the temporal confusion

21 W.M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, vol. 1 (London: J. Rodwell, 1835), 254–255.

22 J. Brewer, *A Residence in Constantinople in the Year 1827 with Notes to the Present Time* (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1830), 114.

23 A. Brassey, *Sunshine and Storm in the East, or, Cruises to Cyprus and Constantinople* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1880), 72.

24 H. Jerningham, *To and from Constantinople* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1873), 241.

they live in: "The hotels are compelled to keep two clocks. Sometimes 1 in the morning, Turkish time, means 6 o'clock in our time; and sometimes it means 9 o'clock. Furthermore, owing to the numerous races and religions in the Orient, there are various days for the Sabbath, Christmas, New Year and Easter. They make inextricable confusion, while the old time of the Russians and Greeks still more confounds us—as to the feasts and Saints' days. It is a pity, if only on the argument ab convenienti, that Saint Gregory, with his calendar, is not unanimously acceptable to these diverse peoples."[25]

Of course, it could be said that, at least regarding daily timekeeping, the confusion is not so much an inherent quality of Ottoman or Balkan society as the result of the coexistence and contact of the Turkish system with the European system. (The aforementioned authors, explicitly or not, claim the superiority of the latter.) Indeed, the confusion is largely attributable to the gradual intrusion and use, in various settings and milieus of the Ottoman Empire and its Balkan dominions, of a timekeeping system different from the official one. Western travelers often give us valuable indirect information on this important process, which can be regarded as coextensive with the wider process of the incorporation—under unequal terms—of the Ottoman Empire to the European world system. Leaving the city of Ioannina for a tour in the countryside of Epirus in the early nineteenth century, William Martin Leake decided to set his watch to the *alaturka* time, despite the defects he found in this system, in order to "accommodate his companions," native guides obviously not used to the *alafranga* time.[26] William Gell narrates an interesting encounter he had when he visited, in more or less the same years, the ağa of Karitena in the Peloponnese, pointing to the Muslim elite's resistance to the adoption of the *alafranga* time: "He [i.e., the ağa] had in his company other ağas, his friends, who also invited us to their houses; and the hour of sunset being proclaimed from the mosque, they all took out their watches and set them at the point corresponding to our 12 and their 24. They had heard of our different division, or rather nomenclature, of time, but were not at all aware of the possibility of using any other beginning of the account than either sunrise or sunset. They seemed struck, however, with the idea that the watches in our manner of reckoning needed not the daily setting to which theirs were subject; and though they were well inclined to believe that the thing might have its advantages, they shut up their watches, each in its half dozen cases, replaced them in their little bags, and hid them once more in their breasts, evidently contenting themselves with the conviction that if ours was the truest way,

25 S.S. Cox, *Diversions of a Diplomat in Turkey* (New York: Charles L. Webster, 1887), 497.

26 W.M. Leake, *Travels*, 254.

theirs was the most virtuous."[27] Even at the end of the nineteenth century, G.F. Abbot, setting out from Serres (Siroz) towards Demirhisar (today Sidirokastro), noted that "[. . .] for the sake of convenience I also set my watch a la Turque, as our own method of reckoning time is unknown in the interior."[28]

During the nineteenth century, *alafranga* time was gradually put in use in major urban centers—a development related not only to the close economic and human geographic communication of port cities and other commercial centers with the West but also to the Empire's gradual incorporation into international telegraph and railroad networks. At the same time, however, the above references and others imply that the hinterland and countryside of the Ottoman Balkans was still attuned to the *alaturka* timekeeping system. This general picture needs, of course, to be further clarified using locally generated sources. Such a type of source—for example, one that testifies to the spread of the *alafranga* time in the Balkan and Ottoman environment—is the manuals (almanacs) correlating the two timekeeping systems. An interesting example of this type of source is the *Ημερόμετρον*/*Emerometru* (literally "Day Measure"), a bilingual Greek/Romanian edition published in Bucharest in 1841. The almanac produced and correlated "[. . .] the hours of the sunrise and sunset in the European way and the hours of sunrise and noon in the Asiatic way for all the days of the year in Bucharest." As the editor, K. Feris, states in the introduction, this early example of an almanac was compiled with the help of "the most precise mechanical clocks" and was meant to replace the older one of Buda, "[. . .] which was printed in almost all calendars, and was mistakenly used until now, since most of the people did not understand that this is not valid for Bucharest."[29]

As it was part of a wider process of incorporation, the spread of the use of European time posed the question of which system the state would choose. As an expression of geopolitical orientation and a proof of cultural de-Orientalization, the adoption of the European time went unquestioned in the nation-states, successors of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, as we noted above. This was not so, however, in the Empire, in which the conflict between the two systems, clearly articulated at the beginning of the twentieth century, was intertwined with struggles for social and cultural predominance. As recent research has shown, the resistance of tradition-minded intellectuals to the adoption of the *alafranga* time, perceived as a threat to Ottoman

27 William Gell (1777–1836), *Narrative of a Journey in the Morea* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1823), 147–148.

28 G.F. Abbot, *The Tale of a Tour in Macedonia* (London: Edward Arnold, 1903), 90.

29 [K. Feris], *Imerometron*/*Emerometru* (Bucharest: In Tipografia lui Eliade, 1841), 2–3.

cultural identity and supported by pro-Western professional elites, was successful enough to postpone any change until after the foundation of the Turkish Republic.[30]

Bells and Muezzins, or Chiming Clocks versus "*horloges a voix humaine*"

On a special mission to Mount Lebanon in 1596, the Jesuit monk and scholar Girolamo Dandini (1554–1634) stopped for a few days in Cyprus and left a record of this visit. He wrote of the absence of bells in the Levant for marking religious services or the hours of the day: the ancient belfries were destroyed, and the Ottomans used the metal of the bells to smelt artillery pieces. In place of the soulless bells, he remarked, the Levantines used the lively and distinctive voice of men who, at certain regular hours, climbed on the steeples and towers and loudly informed the population: "This manner for marking the hours is in use throughout the Levant."[31] Several decades later, the editor of Dandini's reports, Richard Simon (1638–1712), a French theologian specialized in Oriental languages and religions, corrected Dandini's information on the Ottoman smelting of bells for cannons, alleging that their metal was unfit for that purpose. Simon argues that political reasons—that is, the fear of revolts—and not economic ones accounted for the Ottomans' decision to ban church bells in their dominions. Moreover, Simon refutes the Jesuit scholar's perception of the muezzin cries as a substitute for an hour-reckoning clock.[32] What initially seems in this commentary as a progress from an initial inaccurate "discovery" of the Ottoman lands to a more specialized and accurate "knowledge" and "construction" of them cannot conceal the analogy and functional similarity between the Ottoman muezzin/minaret and the European clock/clock tower, both structuring public time and shaping the day. Henri Cornille expressed this analogy most eloquently in his *Souvenirs d'Orient*: "The minaret, a standing sentinel, who raises its voice at intervals, like an echo from the sky, and shouts 'beware yourself!' to those who forget eternity. The minaret, a clock

30 A. Wishnitzer, "'Our Time': On the Durability of the Alaturca Hour System in the Late Ottoman Empire," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 16, nos. 1–2 (2010): 47–69.

31 J. Dandini, *Voyage du Mont Liban* (*traduit Italiene*) (Paris: Louis Biliene, 1675), 24–25.

32 Ibid., 232–233.

with a human voice (*horloge a voix humaine*), sounding the passage of time for the Muslims of Constantinople."[33]

Actually, as the above quote also indicates, the primary analogy traced in Western texts is that between the muezzin/minaret and the church bell/belfry, an analogy related to religious practice. For example, the Ragusan Jesuit Roger Joseph Boscovich, who in the 1780s reached the Turkish village of Cengelköy on the outskirts of Shumla (today the Divdiadovo quarter of Shumen, Bulgaria), drew a parallel between the village's "most miserable" (*misserabilissimo*) minaret, from which the muezzin called for prayer, and his homeland's *campanili*.[34] Analogies, however, imply comparisons and—potentially—value-laden contrasts. When acknowledging the functional similarity (religious or timekeeping) between the muezzin's call for prayers (*ezan*) and the church- or clock bell, and when trying to "translate" the former to the latter, Western travelers did not fail to make comparisons and judgments ranging from ironic comments on Islamic cultural practices to full-fledged Orientalist contrasts between East and West. Jean des Caurres, who asserted in his sixteenth-century compilation *Oeuvres morales et diversifiées* that there were no clocks in the Ottoman Empire and traced the same analogy between clock and muezzin, tried to express the sensation of the latter's shouting, not without a slight irony: "The priest shouts like an absent-minded person who has lost his basket and reminds us of the pastoral songs (*pastourelles*) sung in the moorlands of the Maine around Christmas: because the Turks sing 'falsetto' and [in this way] they are heard from far away."[35] In later texts the church bells, usually prohibited in the Ottoman lands, sometimes function as a sign of civilization, or their absence is used as a sign of barbarity. The "ringing of bells" and the "chiming of clocks" are among the sensory experiences that, in 1850, made Edmund Spencer, having taken a two-hour nap during his boat trip from Ottoman Preveza and reaching the Ionian island of St. Mavra ("the ancient Leukadia," today Lefkada, Greece), "conceive himself transported by magic into another hemisphere," a civilized one. "So startling is the change," he writes, "from listless monotony, indolence and neglect, to comparative wealth, industry, neatness and happiness. In the enthusiasm of the moment, I could not refrain from exclaiming, Happy little isle! Thou at least hast

33 H. Cornille, *Souvenirs d'Orient: Constantinople, Grece, Jerusalem, Egypte*, 2nd ed. (Paris: A. Bertrand, 1836), 38.

34 R.G. Boscovich, *Giornale di un viaggio da Constantinopoli in Polonia* (Venice: Remondini, 1784), 63.

35 Jean des Caurres, *Oeuvres morales et diversifiées en histoires* (Paris, 1580), 504. Cited in H. Cornille, *Souvenirs d' Orient*, 38–39.

been spared from falling under the leaden rule of ignorance and despotism!"[36] However, there are also romantic comments that exalt the exotic feeling produced by the *ezan*, such as that by Edmondo de Amicis: "No tolling or chime of bells has ever appealed to me so strongly, and I then understood for the first time why it was that Mahomet decided in favor of the human voice as a means of summoning the faithful to their devotions, rather than the ancient trumpet of the Israelites or cymbal of the Christians. He hesitated for some time before making up his mind, so that the entire Orient narrowly escaped wearing an aspect totally different from that of the present day."[37]

The contrast between muezzins and bells, perceived as a cultural conflict, is extremely important for this inquiry into timekeeping, since the Ottomans' religious objection to bells, it has been argued, led to their reluctance to adopt public clocks. The Ottoman ban on church bells, an act of symbolic domination and restriction of the conquered populations' public expression, seems to have been quite old, although not ubiquitous. Mehmet II the Conqueror, with a special charter (*ahidnâme*) issued in the aftermath of the fall of Constantinople, allowed the "non-believers" (*zimmi*) of Galata to keep their churches and their religious services, on the condition that they would not ring bells.[38] Similarly, the decisions (*fetva*) issued by the *Şeyhülislams* (the superior authority on issues of Islam) on the occasion of concrete disputes confirm that, to call Christians to church, bells were prohibited but not alternative means, such as striking wooden boards.[39] James Dallaway reported in the late eighteenth century that this was the way of summoning the faithful Christians "[. . .] not only in every part of the Turkish territory, but in the more independent provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia." He explained: "As a good Ottoman holds the sound of bells in abomination, it is supplied by suspending a piece of wood, cut in the shape of a lozenge, and several feet in length, which is played on by two hammers, and produces a loud and varying noise, perceptible at a great distance. Belon mentions, that in his time, some of these instruments were made of iron, but that the Turks soon prohibited their use."[40]

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36 E. Spencer, *Travels in European Turkey in 1850*, vol. 2 (London: Colburn & Co., 1851), 211–212.

37 E. de Amicis, *Constantinople*, 110.

38 "Galata zimmilerine verilen ahidnâme," in Prof. Dr. Ahmed Akgündüz, *Osmanlı kanunnâmeleri ve hukukî tahlilleri*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2006), 477.

39 See, e.g., M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuūd Efendi Fetvaları* (Istanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1972), 95. I owe many thanks to Marinos Sariyannis (IMS/FORTH) for this information and his kind help concerning Ottoman bibliographies and sources.

40 James Dallaway, *Constantinople Ancient and Modern, with Excursions to the Shores and Islands of the Archipelago and to the Troad* (London: T. Bensley, T. Cadell, Jr., and W. Davies, 1797), 132. Dallaway refers to the French doctor and scholar Pierre Belon (1517–1564).

The prohibition of bells was not ubiquitous, yet permission to ring church bells was granted by the Ottoman authorities only as an exceptional privilege, and only in cases where no serious objections were raised from Muslims residing nearby. Apart from Mount Athos,[41] another such case often noted by Western travelers was the mastic-gum-producing villages of the island of Sakız (today Chios, in Greece). "The Greeks of these villages," wrote Richard Chandler, "have a separate governor, and enjoy many privileges. In particular, they are allowed to wear a turban of white linen, and their churches have each a bell to call them to prayers, an indulgence of which they speak with much glee."[42] Whether it affected the Ottomans' attitudes towards public clocks or not (we will come to this next), the ban on church bells seems to have been more serious and outlasted any objections raised against the use of clock bells. Or, put otherwise, bell-ringing was first introduced in certain Ottoman settlements' soundscape through the clock and the clock tower, not the belfry. An outstanding example is that of Filibe (today Plovdiv, in Bulgaria). Since 1611, this city had a public clock sounding the hours *alafranga* on a hill named after the clock (*saat tepe*).[43] The Christians of the city obtained the necessary *firman* allowing them to use church bells as late as 1849, in the era of the Tanzimat reforms. In his letter from Istanbul that accompanied the aforementioned *firman*, the Plovdiv notable Dimitrika Michora warned the notables of Plovdiv that this was "[…] a new custom (*yeni adet*), and the job must be done with moderation." The church caretakers were to be instructed "[…] to ring the bells quietly in the beginning until the Turks are won over."[44] Similarly, Theodore Kotchky reported from Cyprus in 1859 that following the Imperial Rescript of 1856, the Orthodox Christians had built in the Archbishopric a tower capable of bearing many bells for summoning the pious of the whole city, but "[…]

41 J.D. Carlyle, "An Account of the Monastic Institutions and the Libraries of Mount Athos," in *Memoirs relating to European and Asiatic Turkey*, ed. R. Walpole (London: Longman, 1817), 205.

42 Richard Chandler, *Travels in Asia Minor, and Greece, or, an Account of a Tour Made at the Expense of the Society of Dilettanti*, 3rd ed., vol. 2 (J. Booker & R. Priestley, 1817), 60. Cf. Comte Choiseul-Gouffier, Marie-Gabriel-Florent-Auguste [1752–1817], *Voyage pittoresque de la Grèce*, vol. 1 (Paris: Bibliothèque de l'Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, collections Jacques Doucet, 1782), 88. Cf. E.Zei, "Hronoi kai hronos stis nisiotikes koinonies mesa apo ta notariaka arheia", *Mnimon*, 27 (2005), 9–26.

43 B. Cvetkova, ed., *Frenski pătepisi*.

44 Dimitrica Mičora to Stoyan Čalăkov, Istanbul, March 8, 1849, NBKM, BIA (Bulgarian Historical Archive of the National Library "St. Cyril & Methodius," Sofia), f. 782, a.e. 167, 1–11.

with many difficulties and after many pleads, a decision from Istanbul came, that only one bell can and may sound in Nicosia."[45]

As already mentioned, the association of the bell with public Christian religious expression is put forth by certain Western travelers as an explanation for the alleged absence of public clocks in the Ottoman lands. Robert de Dreux—who, as we have seen, was astonished by the only such clock he encountered in Serres in late 1660s—maintained that both church- and clock bells were prohibited in the Empire for religious reasons. He told the following anecdote: a sultan, when petitioned by the people of a certain location to allow them to have a clock, asked them why they needed it. They replied that they needed to know the time for their prayers and the time to drink, eat, go to bed, and wake up. The sultan responded that they should pray all the time; that the daylight alerted them to wake up and the night showed them when they needed to go to bed; finally, their thirst and hunger told them when to eat and drink, so there was no need at all to have a clock.[46] Anecdotes like this cannot, of course, be accorded credibility. Nonetheless, other sources and observations indicate that the question of Islamic "resistance" to clock bells is not merely a construct of Western Orientalist discourse. An interesting entry in a chronicle of the Koutloumousiou Monastery in Mount Athos states: "In the year 1576 the king Sultan Selim died and Sultan Murat [III] became [king] at a very young age; he wanted to place clocks to chime like in Venice, but his jurists (*nomodidaskaloi, ulema*) did not allow him to do so."[47] Although this information needs to be cross-checked with the Ottoman chronicles of the time, it might reflect existing tensions within the Ottoman establishment on this issue at that particular moment. A couple of years earlier, Süleyman the Magnificent's famous grand vizier of Christian origin, Sokollu (Sokolović) Mehmed Pasha, brought to the Macedonian town of Skopje a clock mechanism, along with a well-paid clockmaker. (He had taken the mechanism from the Hungarian city of Szigetvár after its conquest in 1566.) He placed the mechanism in a clock tower, the earliest one built by the Ottomans for which we have information.[48] According to Stephan Gerlach's testimony, the same Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, in

45 Th. Kotschky, "Theodor Kotschy's Reise nach Cypern und Kleinasien, 1859," *Pettermans Mittheilungen*, vol. 8 (Ghota: Justus Perthes, 1862), 294–295.

46 R. de Dreux, *Voyage en Turquie*, 94.

47 Sp. Lambros, *Vrahea hronika*, vol. 1, ed. K. Amantos (Athens: Athens Academy, 1932), 27. I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. E. Zachariadou for this information. The note is not accurate concerning the year of Sultan Selim II's death (he died in 1574).

48 The testimony comes from Philippe du Fresne-Canaye, who visited the town of Skopje in 1572. B. Cvetkova, *Frenski pătepisi*, 140.

the 1570s had in his service in Istanbul a German clock-maker named Oswald.[49] Moreover, it was during this period that tributary clocks from Augsburg entered the Ottoman court as a significant part of the Habsburg tribute payments and fascinated Ottoman pashas and probably the young Murad III, a fascination that was perhaps checked by the *ulema* and confined to the private space of palaces and *konaks*.[50]

However, even if there were religious objections to the introduction of public chiming clocks, these did not prevent the rapid diffusion of clock towers in the Ottoman Balkans. The recurring assertions of many Western travelers of the absence of public clocks in the Ottoman lands runs contrary to the evidence and should be regarded as products of ignorance and prejudice, outcomes of the antinomy between civilized Europe and backward Orient that the Westerners gradually constructed and that anti-Turkish intellectuals of the successor nation-states in the region later used.[51] In roughly the same period when Robert de Dreux asserted that the Serres clock was the only one existing in the dominions of the sultan, the famous Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi recorded in his *Seyahatnâme* thirty clock towers in the Ottoman Balkans.[52] A couple of decades later, Richard Pococke made the same "assumption" as de Dreux concerning the absence of public clocks and clock towers in the Ottoman lands when he saw a wooden one in the town of Larissa (Yenişehir): "The present town is three miles in circumference and in the middle of it there is a wooden tower, with a large striking clock in it, which has been there ever since the Christians had possession of this country and, I suppose, is the only one in all Turkey."[53] Well into the nineteenth century, the Rev. Robert Walsh

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49 Stefan Gerlach, *Dnevnik na edno pătuvane do Osmanskata porta v Carigrad*, trans. M. Kiselinčeva (Sofia, 1976), 81.

50 S. Faroqui, "Moving Goods Around, and Ottomanists Too: Surveying Research on the Transfer of Material Goods in the Ottoman Empire," *Turcica* 32 (2000): 442–443.

51 M. Yonov, for instance, commented thus on Robert de Dreux's assertion regarding the absence of clocks in the Empire: "The story that Robert de Dreux narrated is probably an anecdote, but it certainly reveals the attitude of the Ottoman authorities not only towards clocks but also in general towards the scientific and technical achievements of the time." M. Yonov, *Европа отново открива българите. XV–XVIII век* [Europe Discovers the Bulgarians Anew, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century] (Sofia: Daržavno Izdatelstvo Narodna Prosveta, 1980), 150–151.

52 H.W. Lowry and Y. Dağlı, "The Passing of Time: Ottoman Clock Towers in the Balkans, ca. 1570–1675," in *Yücel Dağlı Anasına: "Geldi Yücel, Gitti Yücel. Bir Nefes Gibi,"* eds. E. Balta, Y. Dedes, E.N. İşli, and M.S. Koz (Istanbul: Turkuaz Yayğınları, 2011), 426.

53 Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries*, vol. 2 (London: W. Boyer, 1743), part 2, 153.

conveyed the same impression of a general absence of public clocks in the Ottoman Empire. Visiting Athens, he exalted the significance of the valuable gift Lord Elgin made to the Athenians in 1814, the town clock, a kind of remuneration for the removal of the Parthenon marbles. And, he hastened to add, "This was the first public clock, I believe, ever erected in the Turkish Empire, and I know of no other now, except one at Shumla, subsequently set up."[54] In another travelogue, Walsh gave interesting, although unreliable, information for the latter clock, that of Shumla (Shumen, Bulgaria): "Here is, besides, an extraordinary novelty in a Turkish town—a large town clock; it tells the hour by a bell which is heard all over the city, and regulates the time of the inhabitants, instead of the muezzins crying the hour from the minarets. This extraordinary innovation, and approximation to European manners, was introduced some years ago, by a *basha* [pasha], who had been a prisoner in Russia; he there acquired a taste for bells; and on his return brought with him a striking clock, which he erected in Shumla."[55] Actually, as we saw above, this allegedly "extraordinary novelty in a Turkish town" had been introduced many decades earlier in Shumen, in 1740.[56] As for the anecdote with the Ottoman pasha and the "taste for bells" he acquired in Russia, this is just another reflection of the latent or overt tensions and "battles" for hegemony over the nineteenth-century Ottoman cities' soundscape.

Still, despite the unreliable and overtly biased general judgments of these and many other Western travelers on the absence of public clocks in the Ottoman Empire,[57] the travelers convey important information on the exis-

54 Robert Walsh, *A Residence in Constantinople* (London: Frederick Wesley and A.H. Davis, 1836), 126.

55 Robert Walsh, *Narrative of a Journey from Constantinople to England*, 4th ed. (London: Frederick Wesley and A.H. Davis, 1831), 157–158.

56 Note the contrast with the travelogue of the Scottish sergeant James Edward Alexander (1803–1885), who traveled in the same period in Bulgaria, on the way from Constantinople via Kırk Kilise to Karnobat: "On the Sunday we entered Bulgaria, the peasants of which are Christians, but half the population of the towns is Osmanee . . . The towns through which we passed were particularly clean and neat, with large clocks on the minarets": J.E. Alexander, *Travels from India to England* (London: Parbury Allen & Co., 1827), 246–247.

57 The biased character of these judgments has been adequately exposed in the relevant literature. See, e.g., Rossitsa Gradeva, "On 'Frenk' Objects in Everyday Life in Ottoman Balkans: The Case of Sofia, Mid-17th–Mid-18th C.," in *Europe's Economic Relations with the Islamic World, 13th–18th Century* (Fondazione Instituto Internationale di Storia Economica "F. Dattini": Prato, 2006), 785–788; Liubomir Mikov, "Cultural and Historical Profile of Clock Towers in the Bulgarian Lands (17th–19th C.)," *Études Balkaniques* nos. 1–2 (2010): 104–126.

tence of public clocks in the Balkans, even as they consider them individual "exceptions." This information is extremely valuable for mapping the phenomenon of the diffusion of public clocks in the Balkans and its dynamics, since many of these public clocks do not exist nowadays and thus escape the attention of historians of architecture, who are the ones predominantly dealing with this subject. Moreover, these public clocks often have left no traces in public memory in the settlements where they once marked the daily time.[58] Apart from the first wave of clock tower construction in the seventeenth century recorded by Evliya, a second important wave can be observed in certain parts of the Balkans during the second half of the eighteenth and the first decades of the nineteenth century. This is certainly so for the Bulgarian lands, as older and recent scholarship has shown,[59] but also for the southern parts of Macedonia, Thessaly, and Epirus, as ongoing research reveals, as well as other parts of the peninsula.[60]

The travelers of this period furnish interesting testimonies on clock towers. The top of such a tower—indeed, sometimes the entire tower—was a crude wooden construction. They were usually endowed only with bells and not a dial. Most were subsequently destroyed by fire or replaced by more solid stone-masonry clock towers in the Tanzimat era and after. For example, the wooden clock tower Pococke saw in Larissa in the mid-eighteenth century was also noticed at the beginning of the nineteenth century by J.S. Bartholdy, who also recorded the existence of a similar construction in the nearby market town of Pharsala (Çatalca), "in the court of a *han*, which took the name

58 See, among others, K. Kreiser, "Les tours d'horloge Ottomanes," in *Les Ottomans et le temps*, eds. Fr. Georgeon and Fr. Hitzel (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 61–74; H. Acun, *Osmanlı imparatorluğu saat kuleleri* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2011); Tonev, *Kuli i kambanarii v Bălgarija do osvoboždenieto* (Sofia: BAN, 1952); L. Mikov, "Cultural and Historical Profile"; M. Dimovska-Čolović, *Saat kulite vo republika Makedonija* (Skopje: Nacionalen izdavački centar-Skopje, 2008); Em. Stefanidou, "To roloi tis polis (stin Ellada tin periodo tis Tourkokratias)," in *"Orion." Timitikos tomos ston kathigiti D.A. Faturo*, vol. 2, ed. S.G.Z. Zafeiropoulos (Thessaloniki: Aristoteleian University of Thessaloniki, 1998), 435–457.

59 R. Angelova, "Văzroždenskite časovnikovi kuli," *Arhitektura* no. 3 (1981): 33–36; L. Mikov, "Cultural and Historical Profile"; Lyberatos, "Clocks," 240.

60 Provisional results of the research project "Public Clocks in Greece and the Balkans, 16th–20th C.," conducted by myself with the help of Post-doctoral Fellow Dr. Dimitrios Charitatos as part of the ELISTOKAINO project (Action KRIPIS, FP7/GSRT, 2012–2015) at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH (Rethymno, Greece).

of 'clock *han*.'"[61] Both this clock, also observed by Edward Dodwell,[62] as well as that of the village Tsaritsani on the way from Larissa to Elassona recorded later by Ami Boué,[63] have passed unnoticed in the local and regional historiography. In the northern part of the peninsula, in the town of Giurgiu on the Danube, C.B. Elliot encountered in the central square in the 1830s "[…]a tall quadrangular tower surmounted by a bell, which sounds at certain hours and is misnamed the clock." On the opposite bank, at Ruse (Rusçuk), he noticed a similar "clock without face and hands."[64]

These are just a few of many traveler references to public clocks in the Ottoman Balkans, which enrich our knowledge of a phenomenon with considerable diffusion in the Balkan cities in the eighteenth century. By the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the majority of the trade and manufacturing centers in the Balkan interior and along the trade routes were endowed with such clocks. The advantages of the new Western devices for coordination of economic activity and transport are among the most plausible functional "explanations" for the diffusion of public mechanical clocks in the region.[65] As early as the mid-16th century, Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, equipped with clocks and traveling along the *via militaris* from Vienna to Constantinople, remarked on the inadequacy of the *ezan*s as timekeepers for the travelers: "[…] Thus, the Turkish day is divided into four periods, which are longer or shorter, according to the time of the year; but at night there is nothing to mark the time." Subsequently, he illustrated the advantages of the clock by narrating the following episode: "Our guides, as I have said, misled by the brightness of the moon, would give the signal for packing up long before sunrise. We would then hastily get up, so that we might not be late or to be blamed for any untoward incident that might occur; our baggage would be collected, my bed and the tents hurled into the carriage, our horses harnessed and we ourselves girt up and ready awaiting the signal for departure. Meanwhile the Turks, having realized their mistake, had returned to their beds and their slumbers … I dealt with this annoyance by

61 J.L.S. Bartholdy, *Voyage en Grèce fait dans les années 1803 et 1804*, vol. 2 (Paris: Dentu, 1807), 228–229.

62 Edward Dodwell, *Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece, during the Years 1801, 1805, and 1806*, vol. 2 (London: Rodwell and Martin, 1819), 120.

63 Ami Boué, *Recueil d'itinéraires dans la Turquie d'Europe: détails géographiques, topographiques et statistiques sur cet Empire*, vol. 2 (Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1854), 80.

64 C.B. Elliot, *Travels in the Three Great Empires of Austria, Russia and Turkey*, vol. 1 (London: Richard Benthley, 1838), 85–86.

65 For details and bibliography, see Lyberatos, "Clocks," 237–239.

forbidding the Turks to disturb me in the future [...]. I explained to them that I had clocks which never failed me, and would arrange matters, taking responsibility of letting them sleep on; they could I said, safely trust me to get up [...]. When they had tested us once or twice and found they were not deceived, they relied on us henceforward and expressed their admiration of the trustworthiness of our clocks."[66]

These Western travelers' references to clock towers, just a few of the references relating to settlements along trade routes and waterways of the peninsula, point to chronometry as a function of human geography. More concretely, they show development of public timekeeping in the Ottoman Balkans as a consequence of the increasing trade and communication of this part of the Empire with Central Europe during the eighteenth century.[67] This hypothesis—which is also supported by the thesis of a Bulgarian historian of architecture who argued that clock towers emerged in the Ottoman Balkans as part of traveler-servicing complexes[68]—might partly explain, alongside other cultural and political factors, the unequal distribution of clock towers between the Balkans and Anatolia. Indeed, the introduction of public clocks in Istanbul and Anatolia (in the late eighteenth or beginning of the nineteenth century) lagged for more than two centuries behind their diffusion in the Balkans.[69] Certainly, the existing state of research cannot furnish more than hypotheses for this spatiotemporal "barrier." The most reasonable of these hypotheses concerns some kind of resistance from the Muslim population, the Islamic religious authorities, and the *muvvakit* functionaries to the introduction of the "Frankish" sonorous

66 *The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq*, trans. Edward Seymour Forster, with a foreword by Karl A. Roider (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 20–21.

67 Tr. Stoiannovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant," *IJMES* 20, no. 2 (June 1960): 243–313. For the implications of this geographic "rapprochement" for the construction of images of proximity or distance of the Balkans to Europe, see the contribution by Alexander Vezenkov in this volume.

68 N. Tuleškov, "'Kraipătnata arhitektura na kăsnoto srednovekovie,'" in N. Tuleškov, *Bălgarsko arhitekturno nasledstvo* (Sofia: BAN, 1, 1994), 28–74.

69 There are different views on when and where the first clock tower was erected in the Anatolian parts of the Empire (including Istanbul). Hakkı Acun states that the tower of Safranbolu in Central Anatolia was first, in 1796. Mehmet Uluengin believes it was in the Western Anatolian town of Manisa at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Lowry and Dağlı identify the Nusretiye Saat Kulesi, built in the Anatolian part of Istanbul in 1848, as the first. Acun, *Anadolu saat kuleleri* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 1994), 34; M. Uluengin, "Secularizing Anatolia Tick by Tick: Clock Towers in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 42 (2010): 22; Lowry and Dağlı, 434–435.

timekeeping devices. This resistance was probably stronger in the capital, the major cities (Edirne and Thessaloniki in the Balkans also lacked public clocks until the nineteenth century), and the Anatolian parts of the Empire, which were overwhelmingly Muslim. In lesser urban centers and towns of the Balkan interior, situated closer to Central Europe and Italy, increasingly drawn into the orbit of trade with these places and possessing strong non-Muslim merchant classes, this resistance might have been less decisive. Yet although the diffusion of public clocks in the Empire was a predominantly Balkan phenomenon, which brought the peninsula culturally closer to Europe and created an "approximation to European manners," as Walsh put it, this diffusion was not readily acknowledged by the travelers as such. Nor did this developing proximity discourage the construction of stereotypes concerning Balkan peoples' relationship to time and timekeeping. At most, the construction of the Balkans as a backward European alter ego, closer to Europe than the exotic Orient, conditioned the mutation and adaptation of discursive strategies in the treatment of the temporal habits of this part of the world.[70] It is to these phenomena that we come next.

From "*montres inconnus*" to the Inapt Uses of the Watch

Clock towers were not the only timekeeping devices whose alleged absence in the Ottoman lands was often mentioned by Western travelers, usually when they happened to come across one of them. The existence or absence of smaller timekeeping devices, not readily available for observation like the clock towers of the various settlements, also prompted the travelers' commentaries. The travelers were usually equipped with one or more watches and came from societies in which the use of the watch and the concomitant "privatization" of time and the passage from time obedience to time awareness and (self-) discipline had already advanced.[71] Especially in the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century, observers like Ogier de Busbecq noted their own astonishment that the Turks were astonished at the sight of their timepieces. The surprise in such encounters thus becomes mutual, and the examples and episodes these observers provided, often socially de-contextualized, symbolize the juxtaposition of progressive and backward "cultures."

Napoleon's general Vialla de Sommières (1764–1849), in his *Voyage historique et politique au Monténégro*, devotes a part of his narrative entitled "*mon-*

70 M. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 12–20 passim.

71 D. Landes, *Revolution in Time*.

tres inconnus" to the absence of watches in this western part of the Balkan peninsula where he served in the early nineteenth century: "There, every time I pulled out my watch to look at the time, I sensed that they approached me to observe it with an almost stupid attention. I was then asked a thousand questions. I understood that it had been only seven or eight years that watches were used in Montenegro, in the littoral Dalmatian region. The rest of the country knows them even less, so that during the events of Castel-Nuovo [today Herceg Novi] and Ragusa [Dubrovnik], the Montenegrins who were removing the buttons and other metallic objects of our prisoners were surprised when they pulled chains with watches attached at their end. Especially those from Zante [sic], they have no idea of them at all, so that one of them, on observing the first watch he had ever seen during the siege of Ragusa, threw it on the ground with dread; and, believing that there was a bad spirit hidden in it, broke it with a stone. Otherwise, with the exception of Cetinje and the Monastery of St. Basil, there are no [mechanical] clocks in the whole of the country, but one can see solar and tin water clocks."[72] The story featuring the soldier from the Ionian island of Zante, a centuries-long Venetian possession with an advanced timekeeping tradition,[73] is almost certainly apocryphal. Most likely, it is simply an adaptation of the widely circulated anecdote concerning the tailor Wilbald, who allegedly, out of superstition, destroyed the invention (around 1500) of the first pocket watch by Peter Henlein of Nuremberg.[74] The French general's emphatic assertions of the total absence of clocks throughout Montenegro could probably also be attributed to the literary license of the author, trying thus to "negotiate" his encounter with a different perception of time.[75] Finally, de Sommières describes his meeting with a local wise man named Zuanovich, who had made a sundial "on a rough stone" without possessing even the basic

72 L.C. Vialla de Sommières, *Voyage historique et politique au Monténégro*, vol. 1 (Paris: A. Eymery, 1820), pp. 156–159, quotation p. 156.

73 Cf. the following information given at more or less the same time by J.P. Bellaire, on gold-chain production in Zante: "A great quantity of golden chains is fabricated in Zante. These chains, finished with great mastery, serve to make chains for watches, colliers and bracelets." J.P. Bellaire, *Precis des operations generales de la division Francaise du Levant* (Paris: Magimel & Humbert, 1805), 151. Most probably Vialla de Sommieres mistakes Zante for Zadar.

74 For a Bulgarian version of the anecdote, probably derived from a Russian or German source, see Mosko Poptonev Dobrinov, "Za iznamervaneto na sahatite za v džob" [On the Discovery of the Pocket Watches], *Čitalište*, 11, 6 (15–12–1871), pp. 272–276 & 7 (30–12–18), pp. 312–315. Cf. Lyberatos, "Clocks," 231.

75 Dragan Bogojević, *L'imaginaire du Montenegro dans la litterature de voyage au XIX siecle et au debut du XX*e *siecle* (Paris: Editions Le Manuscrit, 2011), 12.

principles of the gnomonic art. All sundials in the country were likewise improvised products of uneducated peasants. The general's *politesse* did not allow him to fully expose Zuanovich's ignorance to him; instead the general revealed it to his readers.[76]

Peasant ignorance, symptomatic of Balkan backwardness, is a beloved subject of other Western travelers as well. Richard Chandler, after visiting the Greek island of Hydra, records the following "amusing" episode: "Among the islanders, who repaired to us at the monastery, was a young goatherd, with a sheep from the fold. It happened that one of us pulled out a watch, when he stared with a face of wonder not to be described. Being asked, if he knew what it was, he replied, he could not tell, unless it were a snuff-box. Perceiving his answer occasioned a smile, he added with some warmth, 'How should I know? I walk the mountains.' We endeavoured in vain to make him comprehend the use and nature of that curious, and with us common, machine."[77] Of the peasants he got to know in Epidaurus in the mid-1830s, Francis Hervé remarked: "The besotted ignorance of these people is most remarkable. My watch having stopped, I asked what was o'clock, but found that there was not any person in the place, that had any idea of the division of time, farther than sunrise and sunset."[78] In contrast with Hervé, Peter Laurent, traveling in the pre-revolutionary Peloponnesus, reports that the local travelers he was meeting on the road were asking him for the time not out of mere curiosity, "[...] but rather from their mode of calculating by time distance between places." This advanced temporal conception of space notwithstanding, the watch was still, according to Laurent, an object of great curiosity for the Greek peasants: "[...] nothing, however, pleases a Romaic peasant so much as a sight of the machinery of a watch; when very small, he gazes at it with wonder."[79] The astonishment at the sight of a watch could also be shared by an Orthodox village priest, like the one the German literary and art historian Hermann Hettner met in Messini (Peloponesse) in 1852. In Hettner's telling, the priest could not compare to a cultured German or Italian village priest and exemplified the general ignorance of the Greeks: "Would any one believe it possible?—our pappa [priest] had never seen a watch! and was greatly delighted when he accidentally got sight of our guide's. These Greeks are so simple and primitive, that they mea-

76 L.C. Vialla de Sommières, *Voyage historique*, op. cit., pp. 157–159.

77 Richard Chandler, *Travels in Asia Minor*, 240.

78 Francis Hervé, *A Residence in Greece and Turkey: With Notes of the Journey through Bulgaria, Servia, Hungary and the Balkan* (London, Whittaker & Co., Ave Maria Lane, 1837), 112–113.

79 P.E. Laurent, *Recollections*, 165.

sure time entirely by the sun. A watch is the envied privilege of the Franks. The refrain of a popular song is as follows:

> O maiden! Warm's my love to thee; maiden, warm be thine to me / My little heart, like Frankish watch, beating, ticking, restlessly, / If the hand refuse the key, is doomed to stop and die![80]

However, while contacts with ignorant peasants or priests could still serve as evidence for a defective timekeeping culture in the Balkans during the nineteenth century, most Western travelers of that time increasingly had to acknowledge the spread of the watch's use in Balkan societies, which gathered momentum throughout that century. The absence of official statistics makes it impossible to estimate the quantity and pace of the influx of watches in the region before the twentieth century. However, a variety of other sources—including Western ones—indicate that watch imports and trade in the Balkan cities and fairs were steadily developing and meeting increasing demand during the nineteenth century. Felix Beaujour reports extensively on the increasing European watch trade in the Ottoman Empire at the end of the eighteenth century, dominated at that time by English manufacturers: "We cannot imagine in Europe how lucrative the English watch trade in the Levant is. The Englishmen sell every year thirty dozen watches in Salonica, the same in the Morea—300 dozen in Constantinople; 400 dozen in Smyrna; 150 dozen in Syria; 250 dozen in Egypt."[81] Fatma Müge Göçek's research with Ottoman probate inventories (*tereke*) has shown that watches, initially confined to the circles of the court and the ruling Ottoman elite, started in the eighteenth century to spread among a wider public, a development related to

80 Hermann Hettner, *Athens and the Peloponnese with Sketches of Northern Greece* (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable and Co., 1854), 171–172.

81 Felix Beaujour, *Tableau du Commerce de la Grèce*, vol. 2 (Paris: Imprimerie de Chapelet, 1800), 18. Beaujour's observations in Salonica are confirmed by James Dallaway, visiting Istanbul in the same decade: "English watches prepared for the Levant market, are more in demand than those of other Frank nations, and are one of the first articles of luxury that a Turk purchases or changes if he has money to spare." James Dallaway, *Constantinople Ancient and Modern*, 76. References to the lucrative English trade with clocks and watches in the Ottoman Empire can be found earlier, for example, in Aaron Hill, *Account of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire in All Its Branches: With the Government, and Policy, Religion, Customs and Way of Living of the Turks, in General* (London: John Mayo, Fleet-Street, 1709), 87.

the rise of a commercial bourgeoisie in the Empire.[82] Western consular reports record the flourishing of the watch trade in the Balkans during the nineteenth century and depict the zones of commercial influence and the advance in the second half of the century of the Swiss watch trade via the Danube into the central parts of the peninsula.[83] Felix Kanitz, visiting the "West-Bulgarian" fair of Pirot in 1876, found there several watch traders (*sahatcı*) selling massive Swiss watches and observed that, by that time, even the poorest Muslim was wearing such a watch hanging from his neck.[84]

Consequently, the comments of the Western travelers in the region gradually shifted away from the scarcity of watches and the surprise they caused the locals and towards the uses of this object, which was becoming increasingly common among various segments of the region's native population. Actually, the diffusion of the watch and the acquisition of a common timekeeping method by locals and foreigners alike were diminishing the "cultural distance" and bringing them closer, a fact that in rare cases of literary levity was acknowledged and welcomed. Lady Isabel Armstrong, for example, was very amused by the banter she and her companion had at St. Stephen's Monastery in Meteora in 1892 with the abbot, who possessed a "beautiful chronometer," and their young guide Ariel, whose little silver self-winder stopped. At this the English ladies laughed and suggested that the monastic *krassi* (wine) had gotten into the device. "This explanation was received with the wildest delight, the Hegoumenos [abbot] shaking with laughter, Ariel in his glee shouting out the joke to the mediaeval boy below. The curious thing was that all our watches pointed to different time, and of course Ariel was sharp enough to see this and turn the tables on us. The fact was we represented Athens time, Constantinople time, Meteora time, and Fancy time; however, striking the mean, we all arrived at the conclusion that it was bed time."[85] At a different point in her journey, Lady Armstrong delightfully received the help of a Greek soldier on difficult terrain on the road to Andritsaina in the Peloponnese. "When he had come to my rescue," she writes, "[. . .] he had looked terribly distressed, but once relieved

82 Fatme M. Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 97–107. Göçek's findings are confirmed by Rossitsa Gradeva's study of the *kadi* registers of Sofia: R. Gradeva, "On Frenk Objects," 788–790.

83 For more details, see A. Lyberatos, "Clocks," 242–243.

84 F. Kanitz, "West-bulgarisher Panair zu Pirot," *Österreichische Monatschrift für den Orient* (Vienna) (January 15, 1876), reprinted in Michoff, *Beiträge zur Handelsgeschichte Bulgariens*, vol. 2 (Sofia, 1953), 445.

85 Isabel J. Armstrong, *Two Roving Englishwomen in Greece* (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Co., 1893), 255.

of his kit he became a different man, and seemed perfectly delighted to join our party. It was, however, very hard to get a word out of him, and when he did speak it was most difficult to make out a word he said; so I told him the time, an infallible way I found for making friends, and we got on better afterwards."[86]

In most cases, however, the cultural rapprochement caused by the diffusion of the watch and the timekeeping habits associated with it was, for Western travelers, secondary to what they perceived as a non-standard and defective relationship the local inhabitants developed with the watch and the peculiar and inapt uses they made of it. Western travelers often mention that the Muslims of the region use watches primarily for religious purposes—that is, in order to prepare for worship. This is often perceived as strange by authors influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment. Felix Beaujour explains the significant demand for watches as a result of the Muslims' need to know the prayer time precisely and the alleged absence of both public mechanical and solar clocks in the Empire.[87] It is difficult to know how precise a calculation of prayer times that changed day by day could be with a mechanical watch. Yet H. Corneille eloquently describes such an enthusiastic use in Istanbul on the approach of the great feast of Bairam: "Furthermore, with what impatience they await the end of this month! As the moment approaches, they all turn to their watches. They set and compare them; they count and recount; they become clocks. Eventually, the *imam* let the cry of joy be heard, and the people bounced. At the muezzin's voice, the fanfares resounded and the artillery shook the Bosporus: the Bairam had commenced."[88] The Muslims' strange and "obsessive" religious use of the watch is, however, also described in less extraordinary situations. Victor Bérard found in the Macedonian town of Struga "[...] watchmakers (*horlogiers*), a whole people of watchmakers! Because the old Turks pass their time by setting and disassembling their watches: they have so great a fear lest they miss the prayer, their sole occupation!"[89] These particularly Muslim "habits" and inclinations are almost the only cases in which a concern for precision and punctuality is attributed to the Muslim population of the region. As we shall see, in many texts the Muslims of the Balkans are increasingly distinguished from the Christians in terms of their relationship to time and timekeeping. Robert Walsh reflects stereotypically on the Turk's relation to time and the watch, offering a somehow different interpretation that obviously projects on the Turk the

86 Ibid., pp. 48–49.

87 F. Beaujour, *Tableau du Commerce*, vol. 2, 19.

88 H. Cornille, *Souvenirs d' Orient*, 42–43.

89 V. Berard, *La Turquie et l'hellenisme contemporain* (Paris: Ancienne Librairie Germer Baillér et Cie, 1893), 108.

anxieties of his own cultural milieu: "The Turks, like all idle people, are anxious about the lapse of time, in proportion to the little use they make of it; every man therefore that has a watch is continually looking at it, and asking his Frank neighbour what o'clock it is by his time-keeper, in order that he may regulate his own by it."[90]

The position of the Frank superior watch-holder, giving the true time to the locals who possess cheaper and less accurate timekeepers, can be found in other travelogues as well. William Leake, traveling in Epirus, notes: "One of the commonest questions which a native in the Levant who wears a watch puts to a Frank is, 'At what hour is midday?' This he asks, that he may set his watch."[91] In fact, natives of the Balkans and the Levant are often depicted as unqualified and unable to properly appraise the quality and value of a timekeeper. Beaujour notes that the large and flat watches are the most sought after in the Empire: "The Turks, when they want to buy watches, do not open them, like we do, in order to examine the springs. They simply estimate their goodness by their weight."[92] Edmund Spencer admits that watches are coveted by all ranks of society in Tanzimat Bulgaria but notes that they are "[…] valued and admired in proportion to their size."[93] Friedrich Karl Hermann Kruse, German historian and professor at the University of Halle, goes further. He regards the criteria by which the natives of the Ottoman Empire value their watches as indicative of a defective timekeeping culture: "[…] and how imprecise they are in their relation to time, one can judge by the fact that they frequently buy European watches and they carry them, placed in leather covers, in their bosoms, but they estimate their value only by weight."[94]

Western travelers' accounts often link the superficial relation to the watch implied in the above quote to the conspicuous use the natives of the Balkans and the Levant usually make of it. The functional utility of the watch and the temporal awareness and discipline it confers to its user are, in a "backward" environment, completely overshadowed by the symbolic value the watch adds to his/her bearer. "Most of the richer individuals among Turks," notes Laurent,

90 Robert Walsh, *A Residence in Constantinople*, 126.

91 Leake also compares the attitudes of the peasant (presented here as possessing an hour-culture) and the pious Muslim: "The peasant without a watch generally asks, 'How many hours is it to sunset?'—this being obviously the principal question for the labourer. To the Turk also it is important; as the afternoon's prayer is three hours before sunset." M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, vol. 1, 254–255.

92 F. Beaujour, *Tableau*, vol. 2, 20.

93 E. Spencer, *Travels*, vol. 1, 82.

94 Friedrich Karl Hermann Kruse, *Hellas, oder geographish-antiquarliche Darstellung des alten Griechenlands und seiner Colonien*, part 1 (Leipzig: Leopold Boss, 1825), 230.

"carry in their girdle a large watch, generally of London manufacture, inclosed in a tortoise-shell case, and fastened round their necks with a silver chain; this they show with no small pride to the Frank traveler, and a smile of content never fails to cross their frigid countenances when they hear pronounced the word 'London,' written on the dial."[95] Similarly, in the early nineteenth century, Charles Robert Cockerell visited Candia (Irakleion), where he received a visit from the master of the local pasha's household, "a most urbane Turk," who was "[...] very particularly proud of his watch, and produced it, compared it with ours, and begged me to say his was the best."[96] Not only the Ottoman elite but also the elites of the new nation-states were often criticized for the conspicuous and inelegant use of their watches. Attending a ball in Piraeus in 1878, Henri Belle admitted that the local men, dressed in black, were hospitable and affable, but they looked unpolished, "[...] adorned with very thick watch chains."[97]

Precision and punctuality are, as already hinted at, the main qualities missing in the Balkan and Ottoman use of the timekeepers, according to Western observers. And, as is always implied, the ubiquitous imprecision is not a consequence of the lower quality of timekeepers the locals possess, but of their negligent and undisciplined attitude towards time, be it at the personal level or at the collective, institutional, level. At the personal level, Balkan people could be, at heart, "true Orientals," like the mule-drivers serving Henri Belle in Greece: "[...] improvident, reckless, and not knowing the value of time and accuracy."[98] At the collective level, Balkan timekeeping imprecision could create problems even for early-twentieth-century conspirators, like the officers who participated in the assassination of King Alexander Obrenović of Serbia (1903), described by Herbert Vivian in his *Servian Tragedy*: "From time to time they would consult their watches and there would be a whisper of anxiety lest the moment should be missed for their rendezvous. No two clocks or watches keep the same time in Belgrade, and it would have been as dangerous to appear upon the scene too early as too late."[99] Imprecision and time negligence contaminates even the hubs of Western influence in a Balkan capital, as Ashley Brown complained in interwar Athens, a city that allegedly also lacked chiming clocks: "Even in

95 P.E. Laurent, *Recollections*, 165.

96 Charles Robert Cockerell, *Travels in Southern Europe and the Levant, 1810–1817: The Journal of C.R. Cockerell, R.A.* (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1903), 114–115.

97 Henri Belle, *Trois années en Grèce* (Paris: Hachet et Cie, 1881), 15.

98 Ibid., 111–112.

99 Herbert Vivian, *The Servian Tragedy with Some Impressions from Macedonia* (London: Grant Richards, 1904), 99.

the Grande Bretagne,[100] where, if anywhere, foreign influence is paramount, I found the clocks habitually differing from each other. Ultimately I consulted the manager of the hotel who confided to me that for his part he set his watch by a small clock in a shop window in Stadium street."[101] Finally, when timekeeping imprecision is combined with the puzzling double *alaturka* and *alafranga* time, as in Istanbul, expressions of "proximity anxiety," activating a colonial discourse, may sound neat and justified: "Some watches are constructed so as to show oriental and European hours; and for this purpose have on the face two dials, each about the size of a second hand dial, with separate works. But as it is a matter of some difficulty to make two watches keep time together, so it is by no means easy to make two distinct sets of works in the same case correspond with each other. I heard a gentleman make a neat remark from this circumstance—on a person deploring having given thirty pounds for a watch of this description which would not go. He remarked how impossible it was to make European and Turkish customs, habits, or institutions work together: either might answer very well apart, but they could never be made to amalgamate."[102]

Alien Versus Deficient Time Culture(s): Further Questions in Place of Conclusions

As the above examples show, commentaries on the timekeeping deficiencies and the inapt uses of the watch in the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire are often combined with or supplemented by more general remarks on the relationship of the peoples of the region to time and the use they make of it. Numerous references in the relevant Western travel literature tackle issues such as the slow pace of life or the laziness and idleness of the natives of the region. This kind of comment, usually expressed from the vantage point of a Protestant-inspired normative discourse, become more frequent during the nineteenth century with the gradual development of new, "bourgeois" patterns of perception of the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire.[103] It is beyond the scope of this study to dwell extensively on this type of commentary, but

100 The Grande Bretagne is the most famous historic hotel in Athens, located on Syntagma Square.

101 Ashley Brown, *Greece Old and New* (New York: Mead, Dodd & Co., 1927), 15.

102 Charles Malcolm Kennedy, "The Turks of Constantinople," in *Vacation Tourists and Notes of Travel in 1862–3,* ed. Galton Frances (London and Cambridge: Macmillan & Co., 1864), 107.

103 M. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 108–115.

a couple of thoughts and examples, triggering further questions, are worth including here.

It is in this type of more general assertion that one encounters a stronger tension between the "Orient"—as represented by the Muslim populations of the Balkans, the "Turks"—and the other people of the Balkans, who, though always viewed within the "shadow of the Orient," increasingly emerge in the Western imagination as discursive objects on their own. Ethno-social human types, such as the "industrious Greek merchant" or the "hard-working Bulgarian peasant," are increasingly contrasted, in the framework of a bourgeois ideology of progress, to the "idle Turk," who loses his time seated in a coffeehouse lazily smoking his chibouk.[104] The latter image serves as a common and general metaphor for "Turkish society," as, for example, the Italian poet and satirist Giambattista Casti described it in 1802: "So it is that the Turkish society is serious, silent, monotonous: ordinarily it occurs that you see them seated seriously in a circle, cross-legged and with the pipe in their mouth, drinking coffee without sugar from time to time and passing most of the day at leisure, carefree and quiet."[105] The archaeologist and art historian Maxime Collignon expressed the same view and sensation, more eloquently and in broader Orientalist terms, when he observed a group of Turkish peasants sitting in midsummer beneath a huge fig tree near the small Anatolian city of Mut: "The hours flow for them in a kind of torpor; their vague eyes look at the empty space with a dazed expression. This is a perfect image of the immobile East, where nothing changes, where time has no value and where the words 'activity' and 'energy' do not seem to make any sense."[106]

Not only the Muslims of Anatolia but also those of the Balkans are often described in the same light, especially when the author wishes to make the aforementioned, usually politically engaged, contrast with the subject peoples of the Balkans. The French painter and architect Antoine-Laurent Castellan, visiting the Peloponnese in 1797, offers an outstanding example of this approach. He confesses that he frequently lost his patience with the languor and inactivity of the Muslims of Monemvasia. Often, many hours after leaving them, he would come back and find them in the same position, smoking

104 For the hard-working Bulgarians, see, e.g., Ami Boué, *La Turquie d' Europe*, vol. 1 (Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1840), x; Cyprien Robert, "Le monde Gréco-Slave: Les Bulgares," *Revue des deux Mondes*, 4e série, vol. 30 (April–June 1842): 887; Jean Henri-Abdolonyme Ubicini, *Letters on Turkey*, vol. 2 (London: John Murray, 1856), 172.

105 Giambattista Casti, *Relazione di un viaggio a Constantinopoli* (Milan: Vatessi & Fanfali, 1822), 11–12.

106 Maxime Collignon, *Notes sur un voyage en Asie Mineure* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1897), 86–87.

and playing with their worry-beads at the coffee house. Castellan gives us one of the rare passages in which the natives are shown to speak up and express their objection to the Western attitude towards time:[107] "When we were taking a walk for the sole pleasure of doing exercise, they were saying that we were crazy, that we seem to escape from ourselves, to push the time ahead of us and then to chase it, while they, much wiser, they enjoy all the instances of their existence and they see them elapse like the sand of their clocks, counting every grain of it." Castellan wonders if one could attribute this apathy to the climate, only to answer in the negative: "But it is the same climate that gave birth to the Greeks, the gayest people, the kindest, the most active. And don't we see the modern Greeks, when they are by themselves and out of sight of their tyrants, to indulge in all the delirium of joy? Don't they cultivate the arts with enthusiasm? [...] Aren't the Greeks those who cross the whole Mediterranean with their merchant fleets?" The French artist admits that he does not have an adequate explanation for the contrast that so often struck him in his travels: "[...] the moral character of the Turks is the opposite of that of the Greeks."[108] Other travelers, such as Gaston Dechamps, who visited Athens in 1888 and wrote about its inhabitants' relation to time, produce more nuanced versions of this contrast: "Their busy laziness is just the opposite of the slumbering apathy of the Turks. They do not exactly escape the work, especially when it is easy and well-paid; but they do not search it with passion, and they forget it without regret."[109]

For still others, the "moral character" of the Greeks seems to be affected by geography, in the broader sense of the environment they live in. The British Liberal Party politician Sir Hubert Jerningham employs Balkan "geography" as a catalyst of an apparent contradiction, which, we should note, remains a common self-representation in Greece today: "Then, again, outside Greece they belie wholly the accusation of idleness put forward against them. Their wealth, their great commercial aptitudes, and success, are proofs of their industry, and the energy with which they pursue their money-making object testifies to the perseverance and resolve of their character [...]. Of the Greeks of Greece, however, the same cannot be said. They are essentially idle, frivolous, ignorant,

107 For a preliminary survey of Ottoman attitudes towards work and leisure, see M. Sariyannis, "Time, Work and Leisure: A Preliminary Approach to Leisure in Ottoman Mentality," in *New Trends in Ottoman Studies: Papers Presented at the 20th CIÉPO Symposium, Rethymno, 27 June–1st July 2012*, eds. M. Sariyannis et al. (Crete University Press e-book, forthcoming).

108 A.L. Castellan, *Lettres sur la Morée, l'Hellespont et Constantinople*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Imprimerie de Le Normant, 1820), 67–69.

109 G. Deschamps, *La Grece d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: A. Colin, 1894), 29.

and vain." Jerningham's explanation of this paradox confirms, using essentialist terms, the Balkanist "unstable" and "transitionary" image of this people: "Pliable as the Greek character is, and impressionable to a degree which is curious, no wonder that it should pick up on the way many faults and failings not purely of indigenous origin."[110] Conversely, this pliable nation is obviously regarded as starting to adapt itself to European bourgeois civilization.

These examples point to the intertwined deployment of class and ethnicity power discourses in the course of the nineteenth century and raise two important questions that require more research. The first one concerns how the advancing bourgeois patterns of perception might have affected the crystallization of and polarization between the image of an inherently and essentially immobile Islamic East, with an almost alien attitude towards time, versus the image of a Balkan European periphery with an ambivalent and deficient, yet not essentially alien to modern European, time culture. The second, and perhaps more important, question is to what extent, in which ways, and through which agencies Western perceptions of Balkan timekeeping habits and attitudes towards time are internalized by the Balkan societies themselves, enabling even nowadays the reproduction of stereotypes that, more often than not, contradict reality. In this direction, research utilizing comparatively locally generated sources constructing representations of the Self and the Other (often in the fashion of "nesting orientalisms")[111] is expected to reveal the parallel, transnational, and entangled paths the various Balkan societies followed in their temporal "modernization"/"Europeanization."

Let me stop briefly to one indicative example of influences and mirages and conclude with it. Skarlatos Vyzantios, an erudite Greek scholar of Istanbul Phanariot origin, included in the third volume of his monumental historic-geographical work "Konstantinoupolis" (Istanbul) a commentary on the stillness and apathy of "the Turk": "[…] Whenever you see a Turk lying in the shadow of a tree on the verdant Bosphorus coastline smoking voluptuously his pipe and twirling for hours his worry beads, do not disturb his delight, and do not trouble him, as he is enjoying his *keyif* [delight]. He is blissful […] enjoying his existence by counting every moment that passes by […]. This kind of "philosophy" is incomprehensible to a European. As it is also difficult for the Ottoman to understand what "strolling" means for a European. The Greeks are the proof that this insensitivity is not the result of the climate: even the

110 H. Jerningham, *To and from Constantinople*, 339.

111 See Milica Bakic-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalism: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 917–931.

most burdensome yoke has not managed to alter their liveliness".[112] This commentary is most probably related to the comments Antoine-Laurent Castellan produced, as we saw, several decades earlier, when he confronted the "idle" Muslims of Monemvasia. Skarlatos's passage appears as a loan, a comment or even a reply to Castellan's words. This is highly probable: Vyzantios expressly mentions in his introduction that he had read more than two hundred works by European travelers to Istanbul and the Orient. However, he criticizes them emphatically for the mistakes and misunderstandings they make out of prejudice and because they do not live with the peoples they describe and allow themselves be influenced by them.[113] Quoting a passage from Comte de Volney's 18th c. travelogue of Syria, a remarkable early plea for ethnographic "participant observation",[114] Vyzantios advertises his own work as a corrective: a product of "local knowledge" and unbiased and sound observation methodology. Nonetheless, the comparison of the above-quoted passages on the apathy of the Turks, the liveliness of the Greeks and the ensuing relation of both to time, shows clearly that Vyzantios, a native of the "Orient" highly sensitive to Orientalist bias, adopts and reproduces—probably with more patience—the images, thoughts and stereotypes of the French traveler.

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112 Sk. Vyzantios, *Konstantinoupolis*, vol. III, (Athens: Filadelpheos, 1869), p. 320. For the translation, I largely follow St. Pezmazoglou (see the following footnote, p. 72).

113 For Vyzantios and the methodology and "anti-exclusivist" world-view of his "Istanbul" see the excellent analysis of St. Pesmazoglou, "Skarlatos Vyzantios's *Κωνσταντινούπολις*: Difference and Fusion", in Lorans Tanatar Baruh & Vangelis Kechriotis (eds.), *Economy and Society on both Shores of the Aegean* (Athens: Alpha Bank Historical Archives, 2010), 23–78.

114 Vyzantios, op. cit., p. iv (δ΄); M. Constantine de Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt in the Years 1783, 1784, and 1785*, London, 1787, p. 457.

CHAPTER 5

Diplomacy and the Making of a Geopolitical Question: The Romanian-Bulgarian Conflict over Dobrudja, 1878–1947

Constantin Iordachi

> We are in the Orient, we have a most favorable geographical position, we have the prospects of a bright future. God has entrusted us a mission that he has rarely given to others: the mission to be the sentry of civilization in the Orient.[1]

The establishment and consolidation of modern nation-states in the Balkans was accompanied by long-lasting territorial conflicts. Animated by rival nationalist projects, the new states that emerged from the gradually dissolving Ottoman Empire pursued territorial expansion, ethnic colonization, and cultural homogenization in order to "nationalize" the state and to forge homogeneous national communities from the Ottoman ethno-religious mosaic. Intra-Balkan territorial conflicts were most acute in the center of the peninsula, in the former Ottoman province of Rumelia. The historical region of Macedonia, in particular, involved almost all state actors in the region, as it was claimed by Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece, while since the 1860s Romania also conducted an active ethno-cultural policy in the province, meant to protect its kin minority groups.[2] But acute territorial conflicts concerned "peripheral" regions as well, such as Dobrudja, claimed by Romania and Bulgaria; Kosovo, claimed by Serbia and Albania; and Eastern Thrace, claimed by Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. With the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of new nation-states, the Eastern Question—related to the status of the Ottoman territories in Europe[3]—thus dissipated

1 D.G. Missail, *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 214 (September 27/October 9, 1878): 5419.

2 On Romania's policy in the province, see Ilie Bărbulescu, *Românii faţă de sârbi şi bulgari: mai ales cu privire la chestia macedo-română* (Bucharest: Tipografia Universitară A.G. Brătănescu, 1905).

3 The Eastern Question was a main focus of the Great Powers' diplomacy for over two centuries, from the unsuccessful Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683 to the aftermath of World War I. Not surprisingly, the literature on the topic is enormous: a simple subject search in the Worldcat Library Catalog brings up over 73,000 titles on it. Waves of interest in the issue increased with

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into a multitude of smaller but interrelated territorial conflicts, such as the "Macedonian question,"[4] the "Thrace question," the "Dobrudjan question,"

each turning point, from the 1774 Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (*Kuchuk Kainarji*) to the Greek War of Independence, the Crimean War, the 1878 Russian-Turkish War, the Balkan Wars, and World War I. For political/diplomatic treaties, see mainly: *De Oostersche Kwestie, Door Een Rarekiek Beschouwd. Eene Bijdrage Tot De Geschiedenis Van Den Dag* (1854); *Die Orientalische Frage. In Briefen Eines Russischen Veteranen Von 1812. Herausgegeben Von P. Ostafievo* (1856); R. Arthur Arnold, *The Promises of Turkey: Talbot Collection of British Pamphlets* (London: Eastern Question Association, 1877); W. Denton, *Fallacies of the Eastern Question* (London: Eastern Question Association, 1877); Henry Richard, *Evidences of Turkish Misrule: Talbot Collection of British Pamphlets* (London: Eastern Question Association, 1877); Malcolm MacColl, *The Eastern Question: Its Facts and Fallacies* (London: Longmans, Green, 1877); *La Séparation des Deux Eléments Chrétien et Musulman, Comme la Solution la Plus Honnête et la Plus Practicable de la Question D'Orient* (1868); F. Leflufy, *The Eastern Question* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1871); Rostislav Andreevich Fadeev, *Opinion on the Eastern Question* (London: E. Stanford, 1871); *Observations on the Eastern Question in Its Bearings upon the Position and Interests of the British Empire in the East* (1871); *The Eastern Question: Its Peaceable Solution, Etc.* (1876); Elihu Burritt, *The Eastern Question* (London, 1878); William Vernon Harcourt and Basil Edward Hammond, *The Eastern Question* (London: Eastern Question Association, 1878); Charles Wentworth Dilke, *The Eastern Question* (London: R.J. Bush, 1878); Stratford Canning de Redcliffe, *The Eastern Question* (London: J. Murray, 1881); Thomas Erskine Holland, *The European Concert in the Eastern Question: A Collection of Treaties and Other Public Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885); John Macdonald, *Turkey and the Eastern Question* (London: T.C. & E.C. Jack, 1913); *The Eastern Question* (Stanborough Park, Herts: International Tract Society, 1913); Francis Fortescue Urquhart, *The Eastern Question* (London: Oxford University Press, 1914); Morris Jastrow, *The Eastern Question and Its Solution* (Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1920); Great Britain, *History of the Eastern Question* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920). For scholarly works on the topic, see, among others: J.A.R. Marriott, *The Eastern Question* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918); R.W. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone, and the Eastern Question* (London: F. Cass, 1962); M.S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1966); Karl Marx, *The Eastern Question: A Reprint of Letters Written 1853–1856 Dealing with the Events of the Crimean War* (New York: B. Franklin, 1968); Albert Sorel, *The Eastern Question in the Eighteenth Century: The Partition of Poland and the Treaty of Kainardji* (New York: H. Fertig, 1969); Richard Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question, 1875–1878* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979); Karl A. Roider, *Austria's Eastern Question, 1700–1790* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982); A.L. Macfie, *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923* (London: Longman, 1996); Jelena Milojković-Djurić, *The Eastern Question and the Voices of Reason: Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Balkan States, 1875–1908* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 2002); Nazan Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans: Turkish Critics of the Eastern Question in the Late Nineteenth Century* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010); Miloš Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

4 Due to its paramount importance, the Macedonian question has received a great deal of attention in the historiography on Bulgaria. For recent perspectives, see Victor Roudometof,

and the "Macedo-Romanian question," pertaining to the appropriation of the former Ottoman territories in the Balkans.[5]

These geopolitical "questions" were complex and multifaceted interstate disputes involving military conflicts between local and external actors as well as symbolic/ideological competitions in the international arena. To attain their maximal territorial goals, new nation-states in the Balkans engaged in military, economic, and demographic competitions to procure more resources and capabilities than their neighbors. At the same time, they also engaged in propaganda campaigns to prove their country's rights to contested provinces. These propaganda campaigns were meant to win the hearts and minds of the local inhabitants, legitimizing the implementation of programs of cultural homogenization leading to assimilation and integration. But they were also meant to convince the European public opinion of the rightfulness of their respective national cause, in an effort to gain external allies in local conflicts.

Theoretically and methodologically, I place my study at the intersection of several interdisciplinary research fields: geopolitics, international relations, and nationalism. First, there has recently been a new wave of interest in geopolitical studies. Departing from the traditional focus in this field on national security, the balance of power among states, and military capabilities, new studies on geopolitics have promoted a new comparative research agenda. They have explored competing imperial discourses and the evolution of the geopolitical vision of the Great Powers, territorial state expansion and infrastructural consolidation, and the emergence of new techniques of governmentality, and have evaluated the impact of these phenomena on inter-state relations.[6] In

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The Macedonian Question: Culture, Historiography, Politics (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 2000); Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002); and Tchavdar Marinov, *La question macedonienne de 1944 a nos jours: communisme et nationalisme dans les Balkans* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2010). For public diplomacy works on Macedonia, see Anastas Todorov Ischirkoff, *La Macedoine et a constitution de l'Exarchat bulgare* (*1830–1897*) *avec une carte hors text* (Lausanne: Librarie centrale des nationalite, 1918); and Georgi Bazhdarov, *La question macedonienne dans le passe et le present*, 2nd ed. (Sofia: Imprimerie Houdojnik, 1926).

5 For attempts to insert these various territorial issues in the Balkans into the larger Eastern Question, see Edmund Hornby, *The Eastern Question: A Scheme for the Future Government of Bulgaria* (London: Eastern Question Association, 1878); Vladimir Yovanovitch, *The Serbian Nation and the Eastern Question* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1863); and Robert Machray, *The Eastern Question Revived: Bulgar Claims on Rumania* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1939).

6 On this point, and for an overview of works on the topic, see Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Simon Dalby, "Introduction: Rethinking Geopolitics," in *Rethinking Geopolitics*, eds. Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Simon Dalby (London: Routledge, 2002), 7.

line with these recent trends in critical geopolitical studies,[7] I use "geopolitics" to denote "a set of practices within the civil societies of the Great Powers that sought to explain the meaning of the new global conditions of space, power, and technology."[8] Recent studies have pointed out that geopolitics "is a combination of geological features (e.g., natural resources) with human activity (e.g., production and communication technology) that alters the value of places."[9] In other words, geopolitics provides "a map of sorts, assigning strategic value to places."[10] To understand these mental maps, one has to explore the relationship between symbolic geographies and politics.[11]

The existing literature focuses mostly on imperial contexts,[12] on the grounds that our "modern geopolitical imagination" is built on hegemonic representations and practices of power produced by the political élites of the Great Powers and then projected worldwide through the extension of the Westphalian system of states.[13] Less attention has been devoted, however, to national geopolitics or the "geopolitical imagi-nation"[14] that informed the

7 On critical geopolitics, see Simon Dalby, "Critical Geopolitics: Discourse, Difference and Dissent," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 9 (1991): 261–283; Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics: The Politics of Writing Global Space* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); John Agnew, *Geopolitics: Re-Visioning World Politics* (London: Routledge, 1998); Gearóid Ó Tuathail, Simon Dalby, and Paul Routledge, eds., *The Geopolitics Reader* (London: Routledge, 1998); Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Simon Dalby, eds., *Rethinking Geopolitics* (London: Routledge, 2002). For an argument about the death of interest in geography and geopolitics in the era of globalization, see Jakub J. Grygiel, *Great Powers and Geopolitical Change* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

8 Tuathail, "Introduction: Geo-Power," in *Critical Geopolitics*, 12.

9 Grygiel, "Introduction," *Great Powers*, ix.

10 Ibid., x.

11 For an application of the framework of symbolic geographies to Central Europe and its relation to the Balkans, see Constantin Iordachi, "The Quest for Central Europe: Symbolic Geographies and Historical Regions," in *Regional and International Relations of Central Europe*, eds. Zlatko Sabic and Petr Drulák (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 40–61.

12 On the intertwined relationship between legal regimes, discourses on geography, and the emerging international law in imperial contexts, see Lauren A. Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

13 See John Agnew, *Geopolitics: Re-Visioning World Politics* (London: Routledge, 1998).

14 Tuathail and Dalby, "Introduction: Rethinking Geopolitics," 3. See also John A. Agnew, "An Excess of 'National Exceptionalism': Towards a New Political Geography of American Foreign Policy," *Political Geography Quarterly* 2 (1983): 151–166.

creation of the nation as an "imagined community"[15] as multiethnic empires dissolved. Likewise, little attention has been given to the connection between these visions and geopolitics and international politics. These practices have revolved around territoriality as a central element of nationhood. As Winichakul Thongchai pointed out in a pioneering study on Thailand, "the technology of territoriality" creates "the geo-body of the nation" through a multitude of social institutions and practices, the most important of which are efforts of classifying regions, communication by boundaries, and enforcing spatial visions and hierarchies.[16]

In line with such works, my study explores, from a critical perspective, competing geopolitical discourses about the nation in the Balkans. The emphasis here is on the way these discourses not only emulate but also challenge rival imperial discourses hierarchically organizing spaces, power, and sovereignty in the region and beyond it. Naturally, these ethnocentric discourses needed to insert themselves into the imperial logic of the Great Powers and to identify common interests or niches in the existing international legal regime that would favor their own cause. At the same time, however, they also challenged, implicitly or explicitly, imperial frameworks, hierarchies, and agendas from their own ethnocentric viewpoint, legitimized by the idea of natural rights to self-determination. To understand these national geopolitical discourses and their impact on foreign policy in the region, I focus—following Jakub J. Grygiel—on the interaction between *geopolitics*, which refers to the "location of natural and economic resources and the lines of communication linking them," and *geostrategy*, concerned with the manner in which "a state directs its military and diplomatic efforts."[17] I argue that the geostrategies of the Balkan states reflected their national aspirations but also represented attempts to control regional resources and lines of communications in order to consolidate their power within the Balkan "security complex."[18]

These enduring geopolitical strategies can best be studied by employing the framework on *national role conceptions* of foreign policy. According to

15 I invoke here the classic metaphor of Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

16 Winichakul Thongchai, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 16–18.

17 Grygiel, "Introduction," *Great Powers*, x.

18 I use the concept of the "security complex" as defined by Barry Buzan: "a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another." See Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), 205.

Kal Holsti's pioneering definition, "a national role conception includes the policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate systems. It is their 'image' of the appropriate orientations or functions of their state toward, or in, the external environment."[19] More recently, Ulrich Krotz enlarged this definition to include "domestically shared views and understandings regarding the proper role and purpose of one's own state as a social collectivity in the international arena," as products of "history, memory, and socialization."[20] My approach to the issue attempts to bridge domestically shared views of collective identity with larger, regional, and international geopolitical discourses of the Great Powers. I argue that national role conceptions do not develop in isolation from each other but in a process of interaction and confrontation in the international arena, which accounts for their continuous adjustment and adaptation.

This multifaceted theoretical perspective sheds new light on the Eastern Question and its set of derivate questions. To date, territorial conflicts in the Balkans have mainly been approached under the theoretical framework of revisionism and irredentism, pertaining to the classical field of diplomatic history, or within the framework of nationalism studies. In this paper, I seek to bridge the two perspectives by asking 1) how a geopolitical "question" is constructed in international affairs; 2) what patterns of interaction between external Great Powers' politics and local states in the Balkans were involved in constructing these questions under different international regimes; and 3) what the role is of academic experts in general—and of historians and history-writing in particular—in articulating discourses about national rights to certain territories.

To understand the emergence, forms of manifestation, and evolution of geopolitical questions in the Balkans, I concentrate on the following issues: 1) the rise of national ideologies centered on discourses on natural as well as national historical rights; 2) the establishment of the Concert of Europe by the Great Powers and their *realpolitik* in the Balkans; and, closely related to this phenomenon, 3) the evolution of international law, based on a set of recom-

19 See Kal J. Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (1970): 233–309, here 245–246.

20 See Ulrich Krotz, "National Role Conceptions and Foreign Policies: France and Germany Compared," Working Paper 02.1, Program for the Study of Germany and Europe, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University, 9, http://aei.pitt.edu/9291/1/Krotz.pdf.

mended norms and rules governing state behavior in the domestic and international arenas.

First, students of nationalism have pointed out that, as a discourse on collective identity, nationalism is predicated on the idea of natural rights to self-determination, equality, and sovereignty of a particular national community. For these rights to be substantiated, the respective national community invariably claims control over a certain territory.[21] Therefore, in practice, national ideologues combine the doctrine of natural rights, claiming national self-determination, independent statehood, and equality in international relations, with the doctrine of historical rights, based on certain historical events that allegedly established a nation's sovereign right to a *certain* territory. Generally, claims of national historical rights to a territory are based on two main factors: 1) an original formative event or contract that established a nation's primacy and thus monopoly over a particular territory; and 2) the paramount importance of that territory for the survival of the nation, in either economic or symbolic/ideological terms, such as the nation's alleged "affective" attachment to a certain land. In the words of Chaim Gans, historical rights derive from either the idea of "first occupancy" or the idea of the "right to formative territories."[22] The right to occupancy could be used to justify not only the preservation of the status quo but also the return to a state of affairs prior to foreign occupation.[23] From this perspective, historical rights to a province could be used to alter the contemporary ethnic status of a region, by allowing irredentist states to overlook the fact that the territories over which they claim rights are in fact not (or no longer) dominated numerically by their ethnic kin. In this way, historical rights have been often invoked as justifications for campaigns of ethnic colonization and minority exclusion meant to return to a previous, often mythicized, state of affairs.

Modern national ideologies in the Balkans amply illustrate this trend. Justifications for the expansion of state borders in the region were made based not only on the demographic realities on the ground but on a complex combination of historical rights, ethno-religious factors, geopolitical reasoning, and political/diplomatic considerations. Among these, ideas of historical rights

21 See mostly Anthony D. Smith, "States and Homelands: The Social and Geopolitical Implications of National Territory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 10 (1981): 187–202; Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991); Ladis K.D. Kristof, "The State-Idea, the National Idea and the Image of the Fatherland," *Orbis* 11 (1967): 238–255.

22 Chaim Gans, "Historical Rights: The Evaluation of Nationalist Claims to Sovereignty," *Political Theory*, 58–79, here 60.

23 Ibid., 61.

were the most integrative, not only because they were regarded as providing a sound basis of legitimization but also because they incorporated all the other types of rights and thus were widely used to justify a nation's claim over a certain territory. The emphasis on historical rights in international relations heightened the role of history in interstate disputes. Much has been written about the role played by historiography in the process of nation- and state-building in the region and beyond it.[24] This phenomenon led to the emergence of a type of historian-politician, epitomized by František Palacky in the Czech lands, Mihály Horváth in Hungary, Franjo Rački in Croatia, Slobodan Jovanovič in Serbia, and Nicolae Bălcescu, Mihail Kogălniceanu, and Nicolae Iorga in Romania, to name but a few.

Second, these national claims were advanced in a complex and highly charged international environment. To secure the Great Powers' support for their national projects, Balkan states had to insert and adjust their interests within larger geopolitical alliances and to link their claims with the prevailing international regime, rules, and norms. In a comprehensive overview of the impact of Great Power politics on interstate relations in the Balkans, Benjamin Miller and Korina Kagan identify four major patterns of interaction among the Great Powers: *cooperation, competition, dominance*, and *disengagement*, each of them shaping regional politics in different ways.[25] The political *cooperation* of the Great Powers generally helped stabilize regional politics, since it tended to reduce interstate conflicts through arbitration and mitigation. A relevant example is the nineteenth-century Concert of Europe and its impact on the status quo in the Balkans, from the resolution of the Greek Question to the 1878 Congress of Berlin. Political *competition* among Great Powers was, conversely, highly destabilizing, because it tended to exacerbate and thus aggravate local conflicts. At the same time, it also provided room for agency by local actors, who could take advantage of the rivalries among Great Powers in order to pursue their own territorial agenda. The Balkan Wars (1912–1913) amply illustrate such a situation. The *dominance* of one Great Power over the Balkans tended to have a stabilizing effect, either through the forcible suppression of

24 For the central role played by historiography in the process of nation-state building in East-Central Europe, see R.W. Seton-Watson, *The Historian as a Political Force in Central Europe* (London: University of London, 1922). For a recent comparative perspective of five nineteenth-century historians, see Monika Baár, *Historians and Nationalism: East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

25 Benjamin Miller and Korina Kagan, "The Great Powers and Regional Conflicts: Eastern Europe and the Balkans from the Post-Napoleonic Era to the Post-Cold War Era," *International Studies Quarterly* (1997) 41: 51–85.

conflicts or through conflict management or containment. Examples include the German political/military hegemony over the region in 1940–1945, or the 1945–1989 regime of *pax Sovietica*. Finally, the political/military *disengagement* of the Great Powers from the region had not only a neutralizing but also a destabilizing effect, in the sense that it left ample room for the manifestation of local conflicts and confrontations.

Third, since the post-Ottoman Balkan states did not have sufficient military strength to solve territorial disputes by force, they needed to employ complementary means to convince Western public opinion that their military or political campaigns in support of the national cause were not only rightful but also had a positive, progressive impact on regional and international affairs, in line with international standards of minority protection. To reach this aim, Balkan states employed novel forms of "public diplomacy."[26] While standard diplomacy refers to established forms of official interstate communication among foreign policy representatives and decision-making elites, public diplomacy can be defined, in general terms, as state campaigns of communicating with foreign *public opinion* in order to influence its attitudes on certain issues and, ultimately, to shape the respective foreign government's policy. Public diplomacy campaigns are very heterogeneous: they involve new techniques and forms of propaganda in foreign relations, ranging from public conferences, publications, and cultural exhibits to large-scale press or media campaigns, educational programs, and the establishment of research institutes or cultural centers abroad. Although they are most often state-initiated and state-sponsored, public diplomacy campaigns involve multiple actors, from politicians to representatives of various interest groups or ethno-religious communities, and from experts to public personalities. These campaigns rest on the assumption that, in the modern era, public opinion trends

26 Although public diplomacy as a concept was formulated quite recently, such practices have a long tradition. In the twentieth century, public diplomacy was mostly employed in connection with the two world wars and the Cold War. More recently, public diplomacy activities have grown exponentially due to globalization, the aggravation of ideological conflicts, and the rise of terrorism. For the prehistory and evolution of public diplomacy in the United States, see Justin Hart, *Empire of Ideas: The Origins of Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). For recent public diplomacy trends during and after the Cold War and the 9/11 terrorist attacks, see Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009); and William A. Rugh, *The Practice of Public Diplomacy: Confronting Challenges Abroad* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). Some authors use the term "cultural diplomacy" as synonymous with public diplomacy; I see cultural diplomacy as an integral, indeed essential, yet narrower component of public diplomacy.

have become increasingly important in defining the foreign policy course of a democratic policy.[27] But they also presuppose the existence of a transnational public sphere and an emerging international law that set a certain code of behavior for state and non-state actors in the international arena.

Influencing public opinion thus appears to be an effective tool for spreading certain cultural and ideological values with the aim of shaping the foreign policy course of rival or partner states. This foreign-policy instrument proved especially important for small states in the Balkans: lacking the military strength of the Great Powers, these states found it vital to engage with Western public opinion, in order to combat negative perceptions and improve their national image abroad, and to use their influence thus gained to shape the Great Powers' views of the region. As such, public diplomacy campaigns have become essential components of foreign policy processes in the Balkans. The importance of these practices increased at times of geopolitical reorganization following regional conflagrations and the two world wars (e.g., 1878; 1912–1913; 1918–1919; 1939–1940; 1945–1946).

Dobrudja, a Contested Borderland

To substantiate this argument, the current paper explores the Romanian-Bulgarian political debates and rival public diplomacy campaigns over the historical province of Dobrudja, and their impact on bilateral relations and on the status of the region. I argue that Romanian-Bulgarian relations are symptomatic of the evolution of interstate interactions in the Balkans, from cooperation to conflict and confrontation. In the 1860s, Romanians and Bulgarians cooperated closely on an anti-Ottoman platform: the leaders of the Bulgarian cultural and political revival operated on Romanian soil, publishing Bulgarian newspapers and even launching military raids into Ottoman territory.[28] Later, the Romanian army participated in the 1877–1878 Russo-Turkish War and contributed, together with units of Bulgarian volunteers, to

27 See Hans Speier, "The Rise of Public Opinion," in *Propaganda*, ed. Robert Jackall (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 26–46; and Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham, eds., *The Making of a European Public Sphere: Media Discourse and Political Contention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

28 For a comprehensive bibliography, see Lili Ganceva, *Relaţiile româno-bulgare în domeniul cărţii şi al presei periodice 1820–1878: Bibliografie retrospectivă bilingvă. Rumyno-bylgarski vryzki v knigi i periodika: 1820–1878: dvuezichen retrospektiven bibliographski ukazatel* (Bucharest: Editura "Biblioteca Bucharestlor," 2002).

the defeat of the Ottoman army, clearing the way for Romania's state independence and Bulgaria's autonomy.

However, following the creation and consolidation of the Romanian and Bulgarian modern nation-states in the post-1878 period, both countries entered the zero-sum logic of geopolitical confrontation. The main issue of contention was the status of the historical province of Dobrudja. Occupied by the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth century and inhabited by a multiethnic population, Dobrudja was divided by the 1878 Congress of Berlin. Romania acquired the larger northern part of the province, and Bulgaria acquired the southern part, also known as the *Cadrilater* (Quadrilateral). Subsequently, both states engaged in policies of ethnic colonization and cultural homogenization aimed at the province's national assimilation and integration. At the same time, both countries claimed all of Dobrudja in order to unify the province under their rule. This territorial conflict thus generated what Bulgarian historiography would later refer to as the "Dobrudjan question" (*Добруджански въпрос* in Bulgarian, *chestiunea dobrogeană* in Romanian). Because jurisdiction over the province shifted many times between Romania and Bulgaria, Dobrudja became a true "Alsace and Lorraine of the Balkans," as one Bulgarian commentator put it.[29]

Romania contested the border established under the Treaty of Berlin and, under this pretext, in 1913 it annexed Southern Dobrudja from Bulgaria. During World War I, Bulgaria retaliated with the aim of occupying Northern Dobrudja and thus unifying the province under its control. The 1919 Paris Peace Treaty re-established Romania's control over the entire province of Dobrudja. In the interwar period, the issue generated diplomatic tensions between the two countries, which also manifested themselves in international organizations

29 The German-speaking provinces of Alsace and Lorraine were annexed by France in the seventeenth century, also with the aim of establishing the Rhine as a natural border between France and the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation. France and Germany's respective claims over these provinces led to a long conflict in which the territory changed hands four times in seventy-five years. Annexed by Germany in 1871, Alsace and Lorraine were re-annexed by France in 1919, occupied by Nazi Germany in 1940, and returned to French control in 1945. On the comparison between Dobrudja and Alsace-Lorraine, see Joseph V. Poppov, *La Dobroudja et les relations bulgaro-roumaines* (Liège: Impr. Georges Thone, 1935). On the Romanian side, the example of Alsace and Lorraine was first invoked with reference to the province of Southern Bessarabia, which was transferred from Moldavian/Romanian to Russian rule in 1812, 1856, and 1878 (the province would continue to shift later too, in 1918, 1940, 1941, and 1944). See D.G. Missail, *Monitorul Oficial al României* 46, no. 214 (September 27/October 9, 1878): 5430; and Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 220 (October 4/16, 1878): 5610.

MAP 5.1 *The border between Romania and Bulgaria in Dobrudja, 1878–1940.*

and in the emergence of Bulgarian secessionist movements in Dobrudja. The Romanian-Bulgarian territorial conflict over Dobrudja was ultimately solved in early September 1940 through bilateral negotiations, under the arbitration of Nazi Germany. Unwilling to jeopardize its possession of Transylvania over the issue of Dobrudja, Romania agreed to cede Southern Dobrudja to Bulgaria. The two countries also conducted an ample population exchange, thus bringing their territorial conflict to an end.

The paper focuses mainly on the role played by scholars—mostly historians and geographers, but also lawyers, ethnographers, archeologists, and others—as "experts" employed in the Romanian-Bulgarian public campaigns at four important junctions: 1878, 1913–1919, 1940, and 1946–1947. These four points of confrontation took place in distinct historical contexts, characterized by markedly different international regimes and informed by differing international norms and patterns of interaction between local states and the Great Powers. The first historical period, revolving around the 1878 Congress of Berlin, was marked by the cooperation of the Great Powers in the Concert of Europe. The second period, revolving around the Balkan Wars and World

War I, was marked by a fierce competition among the Great Powers, including in the Balkans. The third period, which led to the signing of the 1940 bilateral treaty and population exchange, occurred under Nazi Germany's military and political hegemony, both regionally and throughout Europe. The fourth period encompasses the political-territorial reorganization of Europe following the Paris Peace Conference (1946) and the signing of the Paris Peace Treaty (1947).

My main goal is to explore the way the Dobrudjan geopolitical "question" was constructed and debated by Romania and Bulgaria under these different international regimes. I argue that the Romanian-Bulgarian territorial conflict and its public diplomacy manifestations cannot be understood without the emergence and evolution of the concept of national rights in international politics. The struggle over Dobrudja was framed within the modern concept of national rights, an umbrella term encompassing historical, public, diplomatic, economic, and geopolitical rights. History-writing was at the forefront of these confrontations: at a time when historiography played an important role in the process of nation-building in East-Central Europe, most Romanian and Bulgarian historical works about Dobrudja have focused on the "validity" of their countries' rights to the province, thus producing an essentially primordialist and parochialist historiographic discourse. The Romanian and Bulgarian national discourses first crystallized in the period surrounding the 1878 Congress of Berlin; their differing perspectives and conflicting claims on Dobrudja set the foreign policy of the two countries on a collision course. These controversies peaked in 1913–1919, amid the military and diplomatic confrontation between Romania and Bulgaria during the Second Balkan War, World War I, and the Paris Peace Conference. By that time the war of words was no longer confined to academic circles but extended to politicians, diplomats, and journalists. The territorial conflict was forced to an end, though peacefully, in 1940, by the "mediation" of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The border between Romania and Bulgaria set in 1940 was reconfirmed at the Paris Peace Conference in 1947.

From an Imperial Borderland to a European Outpost: The Geopolitical Invention of Dobrudja

Pulling Dobrudja into the Modern World: The Great Powers and the Lower Danube

As a modern region, Dobrudja is a geopolitical creation of Great Power politics, closely linked with their campaigns of economic and military hegemony on the Lower Danube and the Black Sea. As is well known, in the Late Middle Ages, the Ottoman Empire managed to monopolize navigation on the lower part of

the river and on the Black Sea.[30] However, in the late eighteenth century, the Ottoman monopoly was gradually broken, as the maritime part of the river was opened to the navigation of vessels from Russia (1774) and the Habsburg Empire (1791). Furthermore, in 1812 Russia became a riparian country on the Danube by annexing the province of Bessarabia from the Principality of Moldavia, thus effectively breaking the Ottoman commercial monopoly over the Danube and the Black Sea. The Russian-Ottoman Treaty of Adrianople (1829) took yet another step toward the opening of the navigation on the Danube, by forcing the Ottoman Empire to lift its *de facto* monopoly over the grain trade of Moldavia and Wallachia. Consequently, the two principalities could take part in international trade, and as a result, their grain export to the West rapidly grew exponentially. In 1837 there were 98,380 quarters of wheat exported via the Danube at Galaţi. In 1838 the quantity increased exponentially to 171,913 quarters; in 1839 it decreased to 148,117 quarters, but grain export nevertheless remained high and was sold at a much higher price than in 1837.[31]

Soon after the opening up of navigation on the Danube, the river became a major artery between Central Europe and the Middle East and acquired an important economic and strategic value, as part of the broader "Eastern Question." The growing economic role of the Danube generated a stiff commercial rivalry among the Great Powers for control of the river. England and Austria, in particular, prized their Danubian trade and therefore favored unrestricted navigation on the Danube. By contrast, although it did not impede free trade on the Danube, Russia nevertheless had a direct interest in channeling the grain trade of the West toward its Black Sea port of Odessa, and therefore it deliberately neglected the maintenance of the navigation conditions in the Danube Delta. This resulted in the three channels of the river becoming almost non-navigable by the 1850s.

In response, European powers made plans to neutralize the waterway of the Danube as a way of guaranteeing the free circulation and quality of navigation, and of preventing its domination by a single power.[32] Thus, as early as 1839, a

30 See Rifaat A. Abou-el-haj, "The Formal Closure of the Ottoman Frontier in Europe, 1699–1703," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 89, no. 3 (July 1969): 467–475.

31 "The Wheat Trade in the Provinces of the Lower Danube (News)," *The Times*, no. 17420 (July 27, 1840): 5, col. C. A quarter was a unit measuring the capacity of liquids and dry goods. It was the equivalent of eight bushels or about 480 pounds.

32 For overviews of Great Powers policies concerning the Lower Danube, see Richard C. Frucht, *Dunarea Noastra: Romania, the Great Powers, and the Danube Question, 1914–1921* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1982, distributed by Columbia University Press). See also Dan Berindei, "La question du Danube et la Roumanie Moderne (1829–1918)," *Revue Roumaine d'Etudes Internationales* 20, no. 6 (1986): 563–572.

correspondent of *The Times* argued that "a new order of things must shortly of necessity take place upon the Danube,"[33] in view of the major commercial importance acquired by the Danubian principalities and European Turkey in the exportation of grains, mostly to England.[34] He suggested that the Western and Central European powers, led by England and Austria-Hungary, establish a comprehensive and concerted policy on the Lower Danube in order to protect their common interests against Russian domination.[35]

The opportunity for a common European policy on the Danube was provided by Russia's defeat in the Crimean War (1854–1856). The Congress of Paris that followed the end of the war (1856) detached Southern Bessarabia from Russia and returned it to the Principality of Moldavia. Having thus removed Russia as a riparian state on the Danube, the Great Powers could implement their plan to grant the river international status in order to assure the liberty of navigation.[36] To this end, Article 15 of the Congress of Paris stipulated that "the navigation of the Danube cannot be subjected to any impediment or charge not expressly provided for by the stipulations contained in the following Articles." Most importantly, the article assigned to the newly instituted European Commission of the Danube, composed of the Ottoman Empire, Russia, Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, and Sardinia (and thus dominated by representatives of non-riparian Great Powers) jurisdiction over the Lower Danube, between the Black Sea and the Moldavian Danubian harbor of Galaţi. The Commission's task was "to clear the mouths of the Danube, as well as the neighboring parts of the sea from sand"[37] and to improve the quality of navigation. Although the Commission's mandate was initially limited to two years, the notable progress it achieved in clearing up the Danube convinced the Great Powers to prolong its mandate until 1871, and then again until 1883. A new conference of the Great Powers held in London in 1883

33 "Commerce of the Danube," *The Times*, no. 17233 (December 24, 1839): 5.

34 "The Wheat Trade in the Provinces of the Lower Danube": 5, col. C.

35 "Commerce of the Danube," 5. For rival projects of economic modernization and geopolitical domination on the Lower Danube in the modern period, ranging from the Ottoman Empire to socialist and post-socialist Romania and Ukraine, see Constantin Iordachi, "Global Networks, Regional Hegemony, and Seaport Modernization at the Lower Danube," in *Cities of the Mediterranean: From the Ottomans to the Present Day*, eds. Biray Kolluoğlu and Meltem Toksöz (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 157–182.

36 For the deliberations of the congress on the Danube, see *Protocols of Conferences held at Paris Relative to the General Treaty of Peace, Presented to Both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1856). See also Edouard Gourdon, *Histoire du Congrès de Paris* (Paris: Librairie nouvelle, 1857).

37 Frucht, *Dunarea Noastra*.

extended the mandate of the Commission for an additional twenty-one years and stipulated that thereafter, it would be automatically prolonged every three years if not explicitly renounced by one of its members.[38]

Dobrudja was at the heart of these geopolitical developments on the Lower Danube. Between 1768 and 1878, the province served as a transit corridor and a military battlefield in the long series of Russian-Turkish wars, as it was invaded in 1771, 1809, 1829, 1854, and 1877. The Crimean War in particular brought Dobrudja into the spotlight of European politics. In August 1854, a French expeditionary army led by Saint-Arnaud, accompanied by 700 regular Ottoman cavalry and 2,500 irregular bands of Bashi-Bazouks, launched a military expedition in Dobrudja to fill the vacuum left by the retreating Russian troops. The campaign proved ill-fated: although the allied troops did not engage in any military battles, an epidemic of cholera resulted in heavy casualties.[39] The "death march" of the French troops would be responsible for the stigmatization of Dobrudja as an "unhealthy" province in the Western press and the public memory. But the French expedition also pulled the province into the modern world: in 1855, a technical mission led by engineers Lalanne and Michel built a modern road between Constanţa and Raşova. On this occasion, the French *L'Illustration* published a lengthy report on Dobrudja, authored by doctor Camille Allard, the head of the French sanitary team accompanying the technical mission, and illustrated by six gravures.[40] Presenting Dobrudja as an uncivilized part of the Orient, Allard praised the "glorious mission" of

38 On the international regime of the Danube, see *Rapport de la Commission technique internationale convoquée à Paris pour l'examen des questions relatives à l'amélioration des bouches du Danube* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1858); Great Britain. Parliament, *Treaties and Other Documents Relating to the Navigation of the Danube: 1856–1875* (London: Harrison Printers and Son, 1878); Edward Krehbiel, "The European Commission of the Danube: An Experiment in International Administration," *Political Science Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (March 1918): 38–55; "Provisions Concerning the Neutralization of the Black Sea and Danube River Contained in the General Treaty between Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, Sardinia, and Turkey," *American Journal of International Law* 3, no. 2 (April 1909): 114–116; Otto Popper, "The International Regime of the Danube," *Geographical Journal* 102, nos. 5–6 (November 1943): 240–253. For the activity of the commission, see the self-congratulatory work *La Commission européenne du Danube et son œuvre du 1856 à 1931* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1933).

39 Winfried Baumgart, *The Crimean War, 1853–1856* (London, Sydney, and Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1999), 111–112.

40 Camille Allard, "La Dobroutcha," *L'Illustration*, no. 679 (March 1, 1856): 135–139. For additional information on the campaign, see the work of the doctor heading the French sanitary mission: Camille Allard, *La Dobroutcha: Souvenirs d'Orient* (Paris: Ch. Douniol, 1859).

the French expeditionary troop and technical mission in the province, that of building "the first regular road in Turkey."[41] That achievement was, in Allard's view, a proof of France's *mission civilisatrice* in the Orient:[42] to endow that region with "elements of our civilization, in order to elevate it to our level."[43]

This press coverage led to an upsurge in the interest in this region, attracting additional investments in its infrastructure, mostly from Great Britain.[44] The main architect of the Ottoman plans of modernization on the Lower Danube was John Trevor Barkley, the engineer-in-chief of the Black Sea to Danube Railway Company, representing a group of British investors interested in developing the Lower Danube region.[45] Massive British private investments resulted in the construction of a railway between Cernavoda and Constanţa—the first one built in the Ottoman Empire—and of the Constanţa harbor. The Western geopolitical and economic interest in the region stimulated Ottoman authorities to launch a pilot project of modernization on the Lower Danube, with the aim of transforming Dobrudja into a nodal link of communication with Central Europe and the Mediterranean, by establishing new settlements and building new transportation networks. As part of this strategy, in 1860 Sultan Abdul Mejid traveled to Dobrudja and founded the city of Mecidiye, in the southern part of the province.[46]

It was, however, only due to the Eastern Question and the 1877–1878 Russo-Turkish War that Dobrudja became a matter of regional and European politics. Thus, in response to the 1875 rebellion in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the April

41 Camille Allard, "La Dobroutcha," *L'Illustration*, no. 679 (March 1, 1856): 135.

42 Ibid.

43 Allard, "La Dobroutcha," *L'Illustration*, 135.

44 See J.H. Jensen and Gerhard Rosegger, "British Railway Builders along the Lower Danube, 1856–1869," *Slavonic and East European Review* 46, no. 106 (January 1968): 105–128; and John H. Jensen and Gerhard Rosegger, "Transferring Technology to a Peripheral Economy: The Case of Lower Danube Transport Development, 1856–1928," *Technology and Culture* 19, no. 4 (October 1978): 675–702.

45 On John Trevor Barkley's vision of the development of the Lower Danube and his political views, see his series of letters to the editor published in *The Times*, which include "The Value of the Danube as an Outlet of European Commerce (Letters to the Editor)," *The Times*, no. 29289 (June 24, 1878): 4, col. E; "The Varna Railway and the Berlin Treaty (Letters to the Editor)," *The Times*, no. 29616 (July 10, 1879): 9, col. A; "Roumania: A Chapter of Modern History (Letters to the Editor)," *The Times*, no. 29238 (April 25, 1878): 4, col. C; "Why the Berlin Treaty and the Anglo-Turkish Convention Should Be Acceptable to Russia (Letters to the Editor)," *The Times*, no. 29321 (July 31, 1878): 11, col. E.

46 See Kemal Karpat, "Ottoman Urbanism: The Crimean Tatar Emigration to Dobruca and the Founding of Mecidiye, 1856–1878," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 3, no. 1 (1984–1985): 1–25.

1876 Bulgarian uprising in Rumelia, a conference of the Great Powers was held in Constantinople from December 23, 1876, to January 20, 1877, attended by representatives of England, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy.[47] The conference recommended dividing Rumelia into two new Ottoman *vilayets*: Eastern, with its capital at Tarnovo (which was to include Dobrudja up to the Danube Delta); and Western, with its capital at Sofia. It also envisioned political reforms in both provinces to improve the good governance and security of the local population.

These proposals were not implemented. Instead, the outbreak of a new Russo-Turkish War in 1877 reconfigured power relations in the region. Victorious in the war, Russia was temporarily able to impose its vision on the political reorganization of Southeastern Europe. Under the Preliminary Peace Treaty of San Stefano concluded on February 9/March 3, 1878, Russia provided for the creation of a single Christian principality in the Ottoman province of Rumelia: Bulgaria. The borders of the new state were to be established by a special Russo-Ottoman Commission based on "the principle of the nationality of the majority of the inhabitants of the border districts," as well as on "the topographical necessities and practical interests of the intercommunication of the local population." Significantly, while the previous conference in Constantinople recommended including all of Dobrudja in Rumelia, the Treaty of San Stefano granted Bulgaria only the southern part of the province, stipulating that its border "will leave the sea-coast near Mangalia, following the southern boundaries of the Sandjak of Toultcha, and will come out on the Danube above Rassova" (Article 6) (see below).[48]

At the same time, Northern Dobrudja was detached from Southern Dobrudja and occupied by Russia in exchange for war damage: Article 19 of the San Stefano Treaty stipulated that Turkey would cede to Russia "the Sandjak of Toultcha [...], as well as the Delta Islands and the Isle of Serpents," which, along with other territorial cessions, counted toward the huge war indemnity demanded by the tsar.[49] Not wishing to annex these territories, "Russia reserves

47 See *Correspondence Respecting the Conference at Constantinople and the Affairs of Turkey: 1876–1877*, Parliamentary Papers No. 2, http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.35112102557131#view=1up;seq=11.

48 Article 6 as cited in "Preliminary Treaty of Peace between Russia and Turkey," 392. See also Edward Hertslet, "Preliminary Treaty of Peace between Russia and Turkey: Signed at San Stefano, February 9/March 3, 1878 (Translation)," in *The Map of Europe by Treaty: Which Have Taken Place since the General Peace of 1814; With Numerous Maps and Notes*, vol. 4 (1875–1891) (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1891), 2680.

49 "Preliminary Treaty of Peace between Russia and Turkey: Signed at San Stefano, February 9/March 3, 1878," *American Journal of International Law* 2, no. 4, *Supplement: Official Documents* (October 1908): 397.

the right of exchanging them" for Southern Bessarabia, "detached from her by the Treaty of 1856."[50]

The Russian proposal of territorial exchange spurred a puzzling diplomatic and domestic episode. According to Liberal British politician and former prime minister William E. Gladstone, the province of Dobrudja was "a gift ungraciously given and reluctantly received."[51] In the long run, the division between Southern and Northern Dobrudja stipulated by the Treaty of San Stefano and soon reconfirmed by the Treaty of Berlin (with only a slight adjustment in Romania's favor) satisfied neither Romania nor Bulgaria; their objections to the budding nation-states were based on security as well as ethnic grounds. The dispute between Romania and Bulgaria was an indication that the national projects in the two countries overlapped in Dobrudja, a contested imperial borderland.

1.1 *History, National Territory, and Myth-Making in the Romanian Nationalist Discourse about Dobrudja*

The question of Dobrudja emerged at the very heart of Romanian political life at the end of the 1877–1878 Russo-Turkish War, due to the disputed stipulations concerning the province in the preliminary Treaty of San Stefano (March 1878), which were reconfirmed, with certain amendments, by the Treaty of Berlin (June–July 1878). To understand Dobrudja's place in the Romanian national ideology, one needs to explore the emergence of nationalism and ideas about the Romanians' national territory. The first images of the Romanians' ideal national territory were forged during the Romantic period. Romantic historicism was animated by the doctrine of Romanianism (*românism*), centered on the idea of national emancipation and political union of the Romanians through the revival of ancient Dacia. The nascent national consciousness was expressed primarily in the creation of the "national" literature and history. In addition, Romantic writers also symbolically delimited the national territory and constructed a pantheon of historical heroes. In the famous opening speech of his "Introductory Course on National History," delivered in 1843 at the new Academia Mihaileană of Iaşi, the historian and politician Mihail Kogălniceanu emphasized the importance of studying the Romanians' national history. He defined nationalism as the cult of one's ancestors, and

50 "Preliminary Treaty of Peace," 397.

51 W. Gladstone, "The Friends and Foes of Russia," *Nineteenth Century*, vol. S (Jan. 1879): 168–192, quoted in Nicholas Constantinesco, *Romania on the European Stage, 1875–1880: The Quest for National Sovereignty and Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 150.

he proposed a gallery of heroes and sites of memory emblematic of the Romanian national identity.

The new doctrine of national revival was elaborated by intellectuals from the historical provinces of Transylvania, Moldavia, and Wallachia, who contributed, to various degrees, to the creation of the Romanian national identity. While participating in the process of writing the common "Romanian" national history, the intellectuals from these provinces promoted their own regional heroes, symbols, and realms of memories. After the creation of the Romanian nation-state through the 1859 union of Moldavia and Wallachia, this canonical view of the Romanians' national identity, history, and territory was disseminated through new national institutions, most notably the school, the church, and the army.[52]

What was the place of Dobrudja within the budding national ideology? The province entered only gradually into the canon of the Romanian national ideology and at a later date than the core provinces of Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, and the Banat. Although Romantic historians constructed the Romanian national "pantheon" in direct reference to ancient Dacia and always mentioned the Danube and the Black Sea as the symbolic frontiers of the national territory, the province of Dobrudja was rarely explicitly included among the provinces inhabited by Romanians in history, geography, or general primary-school textbooks, and only marginally so. The province was most often mentioned due to its temporary attachment to Wallachia in the fifteenth century, as well as its large Romanian population, and the economic opportunities offered to permanent or seasonal migrants of Romanian ethnic origin. These references were, however, rather sporadic, so that one cannot speak of a fully crystallized Romanian national discourse on Dobrudja until the 1878–1879 parliamentary debates over the annexation of the province.

The first systematic geographical, ethnographic, and economic description of Dobrudja was provided by the agronomist Ion Ionescu de la Brad (1818–1891) in a report on the prospects of agricultural development in the province, written with the encouragement and support of his friend, the politician Ion Ghica. It was published in 1850 in Constantinople, in French.[53] Ionescu de la Brad was impressed with the economic potential of the province, portraying it as a "California where all peoples who are escaping slavery come and come

52 On this point, see Luminița Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român." Rolul școlii primare în construirea identității naționale românești* (*1831–1878*) (Iași: Editura A '92, 1999).

53 Joan Jonesco, *Excursion agricole dans la plaine de la Dobrodja* (Constantinople: Impr. du Journal de Constantinople, 1850). Ionescu's work was published in Romanian translation soon after the annexation of Dobrudja: see *Escursiune agricolă în Câmpia Dobrogei* (Bucharest: Typariulu Tribunei Române, 1879).

continuously to feed themselves, and where the Romanians are so numerous and agile."[54] For him, the province's main resource was the Romanian population: "In the Romanians from here I have found our national California."[55] He especially praised the economic role played by the Romanian shepherds from Transylvania who engaged in seasonal migration to Dobrudja—known as the *mocani*—arguing that "in these 6,000 *mocani* is the Romanian California of money and mines."[56] In a letter to Ghica dated June 10, 1850—on the second anniversary of the 1848 revolution proclamation of Islaz—Ionescu de la Brad urged his former comrades-in-arms to continue their revolution in Dobrudja by exploiting the unlimited economic opportunities offered by the province.[57] His enthusiastic description of the newly discovered Eldorado excited the imagination of his close collaborators. Ion Ghica planned to establish a model farm and an agricultural school in Dobrudja, while Nicolae Bălcescu, another prominent 1848 Wallachian revolutionary activist, confessed in a letter to Ghica that "I intend to settle in Dobrudja" because "I need to enrich myself in that California discovered by him [Ionescu]."[58] Although these plans did not materialize, Ionescu's field trip and enthusiastic report contributed to a better knowledge of Dobrudja and a growing interest in the province from Romanian elites.

Another long-term engagement with the province was the educational activity of the Transylvanian priest Nicolae Bălășescu (who later became a monk named Nifon).[59] Active in the 1848 Romanian revolution in Transylvania, Bălășescu subsequently emigrated to Wallachia, where he worked prodigiously

54 Ion Ionescu de la Brad in *Corespondența între Ion Ionescu dela Brad și Ion Ghica 1846–1874*, ed. Victor Slavescu (Bucharest: Imprimeria națională, 1943), 105.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid., 127.

57 Ibid., 111.

58 Nicolae Bălcescu, *Opere*, vol. 4 (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1964), 321, 332.

59 For Bălășescu's writings, see, among others: *Gramatica romană pentru seminarii și clase mai inalte* (Sibiu, 1848); *Elemente de gramatica romaneasca pentru scolarii incepatori* (*dupa cea mare pentru seminarii*) (Bucharest, 1850); *Abecedariu pentru scolile incepatoare* (Iaşi, 1852); *Catehism mic pentru scolarii ancepaltori* (Iaşi, 1853); *Elemente din istoria biblica a Testamentului Vechi si Nou sau Sfanta Scriptura prescurtata pentru trebuinta tinerilor din scolile elementare* (Iaşi, 1853); *Istoria biblica a Testamentului Vechiu si Nou sau Sfanta Scriptura prescurtata pentru trebuinta tinerilor din scolile gimnaziale* (Iaşi, 1853); *Isagogica sau introducerea în cartile Sfintei Scripturi a Vechiului si Noului Testament* (Iaşi, 1854); *Epistolele si Evangheliile Duminecilor si ale sarbatorilor de peste tot anul, pentru seminarii, scolile publice si private si familii evlavioase* (Bucharest, 1858); *Flori de pietate pentru suflete evlavioase* (Iaşi, 1852).

as a professor of theology and author of religious textbooks and linguistic dictionaries. Traveling in Dobrudja to explore paleo-Christian pilgrimage sites, Bălășescu discovered the local Romanian population of the province and devoted himself to their cultural and religious awakening. Between 1872 and 1875, Bălășescu visited about seventy-five Dobrudjan localities with Romanian population and organized twenty-one schools in the Romanian language, also personally leading the Tulcea school. Furthermore, he obtained the Ottoman and Romanian authorities' approval to set up an Orthodox bishopric at Măcin for the local Romanian population.[60]

However, these pioneering explorations remained little known to the general public. Dobrudja's marginal place in the contemporary debates on the Romanian national identity and territory is well indicated by the rather sporadic references to the province in primary-school textbooks.[61] In geography textbooks, for example, the first explicit mention of Dobrudja as part of the territory inhabited by Romanians dates back to a textbook edited by Iosif Genilie in 1851 that specified that the province was part of Bulgaria but hosted "old Romanian colonists."[62] Another geography textbook by Grigore Vlădescu, first published in 1861, only lists the province among Romania's neighboring countries.[63] Dobrudja's first mention in connection with the history of Romanians appeared in 1869, when August Gorjanu listed the province among the territories that used to be part of Wallachia but were inhabited by Romanians and Bulgarians in contemporary times.[64]

These references popularized the province, so that on the eve of the 1877–1878 Russo-Turkish War, Dobrudja appeared more often, albeit still

60 On Bălășescu's activity, see Emanuel Tăvală, *Nicolae—Nifon Bălășescu—între "călugărul chirovag" și "luceafărul rătăcitor"* (Sibiu: Eidtura Universității Lucian Blaga). See also Nicolae C. Ariton, *Tulcea la 1870 Povestea adevărată a lui Nifon Bălășescu, Ismail Bey și Charles Hartley* (Iaşi: Zoom Print and Copy Center, 2012).

61 See Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 156. Below, I follow her analysis of Dobrudja's treatment in general Romanian textbooks. I have, however, consulted these textbook sources myself as well, hence the direct citations.

62 Iosif Genilie, *Principe de geografie pentru tinerimea studioasă* (Bucharest, 1851), 44, cited in Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 156. For a historical discussion of Wallachia's possession of Dobrudja, see also B.P. Hasdeu, *Istoria critică a românilorŭ: Pamentulu Ţerrei-Romanesci*, vol. 1: *Intinderea territorială-Nomenclatura—Acţiunea Naturei*, 2nd ed. (Bucharest: Typographia Thiel & Weiss, 1874), 5–6.

63 See Grigore Vlădescu, *Elemente de geografie pentru clasa a III-a elementară* (Bucharest, 1861), cited in Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 156.

64 August Gorjanu, *Elemente de Geografie fisică și politică a contineneților și de Gosmografie*, cited in Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 156.

intermittently, in general school textbooks, mostly in sections dealing with ethnic Romanians living in the Balkans. Thus in a 1875 history textbook, George Hriscolescu mentioned Dobrudja among the provinces inhabited by Romanians.[65] So did Zaharia Antinescu in a 1876 geography textbook.[66] In the 1875 edition of his geography textbook, August Gorjanu omitted any references to Dobrudja, but in the 1876 edition, the information on Dobrudja was restored, this time in the section on the Romanians living across the Danube, in the Balkan peninsula.[67] The most extensive presentation of Dobrudja, with an emphasis on the Romanian population living there, came in an 1876 primary textbook by Ion Ionescu de la Brad.[68] Yet Col. G. Slăniceanu's ethnic map of Romania and the Romanians, published in the same year, did not include Dobrudja.[69] It was only due to the 1877–1878 Russo-Turkish War and the decisions of the Congress of Berlin that Dobrudja became a major concern of Romanian political debates.

1.2 *National Rights, the Great Powers' Realpolitik, and the European Public Law: Romania's Annexation of Northern Dobrudja*

Upon its emergence as a major political issue in Romania, the question of Dobrudja was linked with the Romanian-Russian territorial dispute over Southern Bessarabia (consisting of the counties of Ismail, Cahul, and Bolgrad). Southern Bessarabia was part of the larger province of Bessarabia (a former part of the Principality of Moldavia, situated between the rivers Prut and Dniester, annexed by the Tsarist Empire in 1812). The Tsarist Empire returned Southern Bessarabia to Moldavia under the terms of the Congress of Paris (1856) that followed the Crimean War (1853–1856). Subsequently, the re-annexation of the province became a central target of Russia's foreign policy, mostly during the Eastern Crisis (1875–1878). Aware of Russia's territorial aims, Romania insisted on signing an agreement with the tsar regulating the Russian troops' conditions of passage through Romanian territory toward

65 George Hrisoscoleu, *Elemente de istoria Românilor pentru clasele primare de ambe-sexe* (Galați, 1875), 3, cited in Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 152.

66 Zacharia Antinescu, *Geografia României și a țărilor învecinate* (Ploseci, 1876), 83, cited in Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 156.

67 August Gorjanu, *Elemente de Geografie phisică și politică pentru usulu claelor prumare de ambe sexe*, 11th ed., 1876, cited in Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 156.

68 Ion Ionescu, "Românii din Dobrudja," in *Carte de citire*, for the third grade, Part IV (Bucharest, 1876), 151–152, cited in Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 151.

69 Col. G. Slăniceanu, *Geografie elementară cuprinzând geografia fisică și politică a globului. Geografia României și noțiuni de cosmografie* (Bucharest, 1876), cited in Murgescu, *Între "bravul creștin" și "bunul român,"* 156.

the Ottoman lands. Article 2 of the Military Convention signed between the two sides on April 4/16, 1877, expressly stipulated Russia's commitment "to maintain the political rights of the Romanian state, as stipulated in the internal laws and the existing treaties, as well as to maintain and defend the integrity of Romania."[70] Despite the unambiguous stipulations of this bilateral convention, in January 1878, at the end of the war, Count Nikolay Pavlovich Ignatyev (1832–1908)—Tsar Alexander II's peace envoy and the former ambassador to Constantinople (1864–1877)—while stopping in Bucharest on his way to San Stefano, sent the Romanian authorities a letter from the Russian chancellor and minister of foreign affairs Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov (1798–1883), which officially informed Romania of its intention to regain possession of Southern Bessarabia.[71] To appease Romania's resistance to this decision, Ignatyev offered Dobrudja as a possible compensation.[72]

This onerous proposal for territorial exchange made Romanian politicians highly indignant.[73] In an interpellation addressed to the Chamber of Deputies on January 26, 1878, V.A. Urechia firmly condemned the territorial barter proposed by Russia, setting forth a number of arguments that would dominate future debates about Dobrudja:

> We do not have the right, under Article 2 of the Constitution, to estrange even a small bit of land of our fatherland. How? When our soldiers die bravely to earn the country's independence, would we, its legal army, accept the detachment of a province from our homeland? . . . We will not

70 The text of the convention is also reproduced in *Congresul din Berlin: Acte şi discursuri ale plenipotenţiarilor Înălţimei Sale Carol I Domnul României* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1878), 17–18; and Titu Maiorescu, *Discursuri Parlamentare cu priviri asupra desvoltării politice a României sub Domnia lui Carol I*, vol. 2 (1876–1881) (Bucharest: Socec, 1897), 65–66.

71 According to Kogălniceanu's account in the Parliament, the Tsarist diplomacy alluded, for the first time, to Russia's intention to annex Bessarabia in a secret exchange that took place in June 1877, but that unofficial allusion was neither amply discussed nor shared publicly. See *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 220 (October 4/16, 1878): 5612.

72 Although the letter did not expressly mention Dobrudja, the terms of the exchange were further detailed by Count Ignatyev. See I.C. Brătianu and Mihail Kogălniceau, "Memoriul prezentat la Congresul din Berlin de către Plenipotenţiarii Înâlţimii Sale Domnitorul României," in *Congresul din Berlin: Acte şi discursuri ale plenipotenţiarilor Înălţimei Sale Carol I Domnul României* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1878), 6.

73 The subsequent analysis builds and expands on arguments first put forward in Constantin Iordachi, *Citizenship, Nation and State-Building: The Integration of Northern Dobrogea into Romania, 1878–1913*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2002, Carl Back Papers in Russian and East European Studies No. 1607), 9–16.

> give it up voluntarily, since this would be an act of suicide: Bessarabia and the mouth of the Danube are our titles of nobility, which have opened and will open for us the doors of ambassadors and of European diplomacy, and which can bring us our desired diplomatic neutrality.[74]

On the basis of these arguments, Urechia rejected the annexation of Dobrudja, stating explicitly that the province was not part of Romania's national project: "We cannot exchange Bessarabia for other territorial compensations. (Applause) No, we are not a conquering people; by raising our sword to gain independence we do not mean to take away the independence of others, we do not want to create future conflicts by annexing lands that are not ours."[75]

In the same vein, reacting to an interpellation initiated by D. Ghica, the Senate of Romania unanimously adopted a resolution pledging "to maintain the integrity of the country's territory and to reject any estrangement of its land, under any conditions and regardless of any territorial or financial compensation," based on its conviction that "an independent and homogeneous Romania corresponds to the interests both of its neighbors and of all Europe."[76] At a time when Romania's diplomatic efforts were directed toward the preservation of Bessarabia, Dobrudja became the very symbol of an onerous bargain, and its refusal was a way of defending the country's integrity.

Despite Romania's categorical refusal of the proposed territorial exchange, Russia went ahead with its annexation plans. The territorial exchange between Northern Dobrudja and Southern Bessarabia was expressly mentioned in the Preliminary Peace Treaty of San Stefano signed on February 9/March 3, 1878, as shown above. Once again, Romanian politicians and public opinion, led by Prime Minister I.C. Brătianu and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mihail Kogălniceanu, refused to comply. On March 9, 1878, a few days after the signing of the Treaty of San Stefano, Minister Kogălniceanu sent a diplomatic memo to the Great Powers, on behalf of the Romanian government, in which he portrayed the acquisition of Dobrudja as "essentially prejudicial for the Principalities" and "an embarrassment, a burden and probably a permanent danger."[77]

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74 *Monitorul Oficial al României* 46, no. 021 (January 27, 1878): 449.

75 *Monitorul Oficial*, 449.

76 Ibid., 445–446, republished with corrections in *Monitorul Oficial al României* 46, no. 022 (January 28, 1878): 467. See also Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 4, *Oratorie II* (*1874–1878*), ed. Georgeta Penelea (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1974), 529.

77 "Memoriu în chestiunea Basarabiei" (February 25/March 9, 1878), in Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 4, *Oratorie II* (*1874–1878*), 578–579.

How can one account for Romanian politicians' staunch and near-unanimous rejection of the proposed territorial exchange? It should be noted that, even if Dobrudja was allegedly of less economic value at the time, in territorial and demographic terms the exchange was roughly even, with Dobrudja slightly larger (as Russian diplomats duly emphasized). In 1878 the three counties of Southern Bessarabia were 8,355 sq. kilometers and had 163,000 inhabitants, while Northern Dobrudja was 15,536 sq. kilometers (including 4,964 sq. kilometers of waters and swamps in the Danube Delta) and had 169,000 inhabitants.[78] The main reason that the Romanians refused the exchange was their commitment to their country's territorial inviolability. Legally, this principle was stipulated by Article 2 of the country's 1866 Constitution, which stated: "The territory of Romania is inalienable. The state territory can be changed or modified only by a law enacted by Parliament." Internationally, the principle was also endorsed, as noted above, by the Military Convention signed between the Tsarist Empire and Romania on April 4/16, 1877. Romanian politicians' refusal to cede Southern Bessarabia is further explained by the symbolic importance of that province in the Romanian national ideology. Southern Bessarabia was regarded as a core territory of Romania that provided, through its access to the Black Sea, a vital commercial outlet for the country's foreign trade. This belief was eloquently expressed by Prime Minister Ion Brătianu, who, on March 21/April 2, 1878, declared:

> We cannot exist without that small part of Bessarabia. We would suffocate without that region. Through it, the gates of the world open up to us. Without Bessarabia we would be engulfed by Russia, Austria, Turkey, and Bulgaria. Dobrudja doesn't open up any access for us, and without direct communication routes, we would be able to communicate with it only through swamps and marshes, or through a roundabout journey that we would have to take through the mouth of the Danube. This we would not be able to accept under any circumstances.
>
> —In other words, responded our correspondent, you refuse to annex Dobrudja?
>
> —Yes, indeed, we do not accept Dobrudja.
>
> —But what if Russia occupies Bessarabia by force?
>
> —We cannot prevent it from doing so, says Mr. Brătianu. In the face of the overwhelming force of the stronger, the smaller cannot do anything.

78 Leonida Colescu, *Analiza recensământul general al populaţiei României dela 1899* (Bucharest: Institutul Central de Statistică, 1944), 9.

> We cannot oppose material resistance [against Bessarabia's loss], this is clear. In spite of this, we will not accept Dobrudja.[79]

Kogălniceanu's diplomatic memo and Brătianu's press statements expressed not only Romania's strong attachment to Southern Bessarabia but also the country's determination to unilaterally reject the annexation of Dobrudja. Consequently, after the signing of the Treaty of San Stefano, the Romanian government tried to secure diplomatic support to get the peace treaty's stipulations concerning Romania reversed. To back the government's position, on June 28, 1878, on the eve of the Congress of Berlin, a resolution of the Chamber of Deputies proposed by forty-six deputies reiterated Parliament's January 1878 declaration. It firmly rejected the annexation of Dobrudja under any circumstances, declaring it "detrimental to Romania's interest."[80] This unequivocal parliamentary declaration was accompanied by a strident press campaign against the annexation of the province. Opponents of the annexation employed an impressive range of arguments against Dobrudja. They portrayed its population as "an assemblage of most turbulent elements gathered there from all over the world" and described the province as "a marshy country, in which yellow fever is endemic" and one whose administration would prove "the ruin of our finance."[81]

The Congress of the European Great Powers that took place in Berlin June 13–July 13, 1878, modified the previous Russian-Turkish Treaty of San Stefano in numerous ways. Romania sent two representatives to the Congress, Prime Minister Brătianu and Foreign Minister Kogălniceanu, who made their case before the diplomats of the Great Powers for the recognition of Romania's independence and the preservation of its territorial integrity. Invoking the Russian-Romanian military convention of April 4/16, 1877, Brătianu and Kogălniceanu openly criticized the unjust stipulations of the Treaty of San Stefano concerning Romania:

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79 Interview with Prime Minister Brătianu in *Deutsche Zeitung* (Vienna), March 21/April 2, 1878, reproduced in *Steaua României* (Bucharest), March 25, 1878, reprinted in *Izvori za istoriyata na Dobrudzha, 1878–1919*, eds. Kosyo Penchikov, Zheko Popov, and Petăr Todorov (Sofia: Izd-vo na Bălgarskata akademiya na naukite, 1992), 21.

80 Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 4, 322.

81 See the editorial from *Steaua României* (Bucharest) no. 139 (June 23, 1878), an example of the texts virulently opposing the annexation of Dobrudja. For a summary of all the arguments against taking Dobrudja, see Nicolae Locusteanu's passionate anti-annexation brochure, *Dobrudja* (Bucharest, 1878).

> After a successful military campaign, Romania would suffer the loss of a part of its territory and of the only maritime coast it possesses. Even more, instead of regaining the peace that it sorely needs in order to restore its power, it would experience, for a long time, the military transit of foreign troops over its territory, which could very easily turn into a real occupation. Indeed, Romania's independence is stipulated by the Treaty but, without its borders on the Lower Danube and the sea, and condemned to an extended occupation, our Principality would in fact be neither independent nor free. Instead of improving its condition, its situation would become far more uncertain and endangered than in the past.[82]

To repair these injustices, Romania's representatives advanced a list of five main demands: 1) the preservation of the country's territorial integrity; 2) the interdiction of foreign armies (e.g. the Tsarist one) to transit Romania; 3) possession of the Danube Delta and the Serpents' Island; 4) the right to war damages proportionate with Romania's military effort; and 5) the recognition of its independence and perpetual neutrality. In the end, invoking the Romanian army's contribution to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, Kogălniceanu pointed out that:

> These requests exceed neither our *particular rights* nor the principles of justice in general. Fulfilling them, the Congress would enable grateful Romania to advance on the path of order, of culture and progress. *And, in this sense, the particular interest of the Romanian Nation is in full harmony with the general interest of Europe*. Even Romania's geographical position makes her cause identical with that of Europe's peace and stability.[83]

However, to the disappointment of Romanian political elites, Romania's representatives at the Congress were only "heard but not listened to." Despite their pleas, the Treaty of Berlin accepted only one of Romania's demands, that concerning its possession of the Danube Delta and the Black Sea (Article 46). In addition to these two pieces of land, Romania also received Northern Dobrudja (the Ottoman sanjak of Tulcea), despite the fact that this province was not demanded by Romania's representatives at the Congress. To appease

82 Brătianu and Kogălniceau, "Memoriul prezentat la Congresul din Berlin," in *Congresul din Berlin*, 6–7.

83 Ibid., 7.

Romania's objections, the southern border of the province was extended beyond the stipulations of the Treaty of San Stefano, to include "the territory situated in the South of Dobrudja until a line having its point of departure at the East of the city of Silistra and arriving at the Black Sea in the south of the city of Mangalia."[84] As anticipated, these annexations came at a high cost: Article 45 obliged Romania to cede Southern Bessarabia to Russia. Finally, Articles 43–44 conditioned the recognition of Romania's independence on the country granting citizenship to its non-Christian subjects (who were mostly Jews but also included Muslims, through the annexation of Dobrudja).

The decisions of the Congress of Berlin stirred great political turmoil among Romanian politicians and public opinion. "I do not believe there is in Romania a house or a hut where they do not comment on the painful blows inflicted upon us by this treaty," pointed out Kogălniceanu in the Chamber of Deputies, "where they do not deplore the unjust dismemberment of the country, the loss of our beloved Bessarabia, where, finally, they are not aware of all the sacrifices asked from Romania by the Great Aeropagus in the interest of world peace."[85] Moreover, while prior to the Congress of Berlin, the government managed to rally the political opposition on a common platform of national unity, the political debates over the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin set off a second phase of resistance to Dobrudja's annexation by dividing Romanian politicians into "pro-Dobrudjans and anti-Dobrudjans."[86] The government appealed to the national feelings of the members of Parliament, urging them to engage in "Romanian" or "national" politics and not "party politics." Nevertheless, the political split occurred, by and large, along party lines, between the ruling Liberal Party and the opposition Conservative Party. Believing that resistance to the European decision would be "political suicide," the main political decision-makers, namely Prince Carol I,[87] Prime Minister Ion C. Brătianu, and

84 See "Treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia and Turkey for the Settlement of Affairs in the East Signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878," *American Journal of International Law* 2, no. 4, *Supplement: Official Documents* (1908). The text of the treaty was printed in Romanian in *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 160 (July 22/August 8, 1878). See also *Independenţa României*, vol. 1, *Documente şi presa vremii* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1977).

85 Mihail Kogălniceanu, speech in the Chamber of Deputies, September 30, 1878, in *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 220 (October 4/16, 1878): 5610.

86 Ion C. Brătianu, *Acte şi cuvîntări*, ed. N. Georgescu-Tistu, vol. 4 (May 1, 1878–April 30, 1879) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1932), 260.

87 King Carol I's support for Dobrudja's annexation was most likely also influenced by his father, Prince Karl Anton. In a letter to Carol dated January 20, 1878, Karl Anton pointed out that it would be nonsense for Romania to resist Russia's will. He also emphasized that,

Foreign Minister Mihail Kogălniceanu, favored compliance with the Treaty of Berlin and the annexation of Dobrudja.[88] By contrast, the Conservative opposition, catalyzed by its leaders Dimitrie A. Sturdza, Nicolae Dimancea, Petre P. Carp, and Titu Maiorescu, continued to oppose the annexation of Dobrudja. However, not all Romanian politicians' objections to the annexation can be understood as conservative opposition tactics against the liberal government. Close analysis of the parliamentary debates on this issue reveals that politicians of different political orientations, some of them within the ruling liberal camp, expressed reservations concerning the annexation of Dobrudja that went beyond the political struggles of the day. For example, the Conservatives' anti-annexation campaign was also joined by the "Liberal and Independent Faction" led by N.D. Ionescu, who, though a supporter of the government, dissented from it on the issue of Dobrudja. Thus leading members of the Romanian political elite genuinely perceived Dobrudja's geopolitical position and ethnic composition as a potential danger to Romania's ethnic homogeneity and political stability.

The Romanian Parliament met on September 15, 1878, in an extraordinary session to decide the country's official position on the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin. The first confrontation between the "pro-" and "anti-Dobrudja" politicians occurred during the debates of the parliamentary commission formed in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies to study the effects of the Treaty of Berlin and to make policy recommendations. In the Senate, the majority of the commission proposed a motion that, after lamenting the "painful sacrifices" imposed on Romania by the Treaty of Berlin, authorized the government "to take into possession Dobrudja and the Danube Delta and to administer them through regulations of public administration."[89] The commission also demanded that, within three months, a new Constituent Assembly be elected, which would decide on the revision of the constitution and on the internal organization of Dobrudja. In an alternative minority motion, Manolache Costache Epureanu denied that the Senate had the authority to decide on the annexation of Dobrudja. He proposed only a temporary occupation

although Dobrudja's land was then largely unproductive, the province presented numerous latent advantages, as the port of Constanţa could potentially play an important commercial role on the Black Sea. See "Letter of Prince Karl Anton to His Son Carol, Regarding the Territorial Exchange of Bessarabia for Dobrudja," in *Izvori*, eds. Penchikov, Popov, and Todorov, 16.

88 Brătianu, "Moțiunea Senatului asupra Tratatului de la Berlin," in *Acte şi cuvîntări*, vol. 4, 103.

89 This motion was signed by D. Ghika, C. Bosianu, G. Anghelescu, V. Boerescu, D.A. Giani, and Primate Metropolitan of the Romanian Orthodox Church D. Brătianu.

of the province until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, which in his view was the only institution legally authorized to decide on the matter.[90] Epureanu's proposal was supported by other senators, who argued that the annexation of Dobrudja was an important issue that could be solved only by a new Constitutional Assembly, because it changed "the country's geographical configuration" and "made an infusion of foreign elements in the Romanian blood," estimated at "about 300,000 souls," composed of "the most disparate elements."[91] The most vehement attack on the liberal government's foreign policy and the annexation of Dobrudja came from D. Sturdza, who called Dobrudja "a marshy and unhealthy country, full of fever" and "one of the poorest countries in Europe."[92]

In the Chamber of Deputies, the debates were even fiercer and more lengthy than in the Senate. The motion of the majority of the Parliamentary Commission, made up of Colonel D. Leca, N. Fleva, P. Grădişteanu, and E. Costinescu, recommended: "Forced by the decision of the Powers and unwilling to constitute an obstacle against peace, the commission authorizes the government to conform to the collective will of Europe and to withdraw the civil and military authorities from Bessarabia, *and to take into possession* Dobrudja and the Danube Delta."[93] By contrast, a minority faction within the commission, composed of N.D. Ionescu, Gr. Cozadini, and D.G. Misail, passed an alternative resolution. This recommended that the Parliament not consent to the abandonment of Bessarabia but allow the government to "withdraw military and civil authorities from that part of Romania in order to avoid any conflict," yet "in line with its previous votes on the issue [see the resolution of January 1878], it cannot accept Dobrudja."[94]

During tense parliamentary debates, the opponents of Dobrudja's annexation put forth numerous geopolitical, ethnic, and political objections. They urged Romania to refuse to implement the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin; they said Romania needed to defend Bessarabia and unilaterally reject the annexation of Dobrudja. In their view, Dobrudja was "a fatal gift" granted by imperial Russia to Romania, and its acquisition would ruin the Latin ethnic

90 *Monitorul oficial al României*, no. 218 (October 1/13, 1878): 5533.

91 Senator I. Strat, in ibid., 5536, 5537.

92 Senator D.A. Sturdza, in ibid., 5536.

93 See "Raportul comisiunii alese de Cameră pentru a formula o încheiere în chestiunea Tratatului din Berlin," September 29, 1878, in Ion C. Brătianu, *Acte şi cuvîntări*, ed. N. Georgescu-Tistu, vol. 4 (May 1, 1878–April 30, 1879) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1932), 366. See also *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 218 (October 1/13, 1878): 5545–5546.

94 *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 218 (October 1/13, 1878): 5546.

homogeneity of the Romanian people, embroil Romania within Russia's geopolitical plans in the Balkans, harm diplomatic relations with Serbia and Bulgaria, and require unreasonable financial sacrifices. The most substantive nationalist concern regarding annexation was the diversity of Dobrudja's population, the majority of which was grouped in anthropologically "closed" or "semi-closed" ethno-religious communities:[95] thus Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, and Russians were part of the larger Eastern Orthodox Christian commonwealth, yet the Bulgarians had just separated administratively into their own exarchate, while the Russian Ancient Orthodox Believers (Lipovans) had their own old-rite church hierarchy; likewise, Italian Catholics, German Protestants, and the Jews were grouped in autonomous communities, while the Muslim Turks and Tartars in Dobrudja were part of the larger Ottoman Ummah community.

> No! We cannot accept Dobrudja in exchange for our ancestral land! We cannot exchange our Romanians of Bessarabia for Circassians, Tatars, Turks and Bulgarians. This exchange that the Treaty urges us to accept could be like a deadly plague for the Romanian nation, in view of all the diseases that can be found in Dobrudja. No, we do not accept, because we already have a social question in the country; we do not need a second, Slavic question, and possibly an additional Muslim one![96]

Another concern of the opposition was that the annexation of Dobrudja would not only spoil the country's ethnic homogeneity but would also irreparably harm its relations with Bulgaria. This point was eloquently argued by deputy D.G. Missail:

> We also refuse Dobrudja because we would not like to appear—in the eyes of the peoples for whom we have shed our blood—as conquerors of their land. Right or wrong, I persist in my belief that Dobrudja is not a Romanian land, despite all that the Honorable Mr. Ionescu wrote about it in 1855 [actually in 1850], and which I have read. I would like my country to be big and large but populated only by Romanians. Dobrudja is not; on the contrary, the Bulgarians claim it as a land of their own. The other day, they appealed to our feelings of fairness through their main advertising organ from Rusciuk, reminding us that we have pledged to be uninter-

95 On closed ethno-confessional groups, with direct reference to the Lipovans, see Ethel Dunn and Stephen P. Dunn, "The Problem of the Sects in the Soviet Union," *Slavic Review*, 23 (September 1964), no. 3, 459–478, esp. 459.

96 Deputy Furculescu, in *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 218 (October 1/13, 1878), 5551.

FIGURE 5.1 *Romania, in the situation created by the Congress of Berlin* (România în starea ce ĭ-a creat Congresul din Berlin)*, September 1878. Shackled by the "Stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin," Romania is framed by a conspiracy of the Great Powers: working behind the scene, Russia takes away Romania's crown, the province of Bessarabia, and in exchange gives Dobrudja, represented as a heavy weight around her neck. The conspiracy is overseen by Russian chancellor Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov and German chancellor Otto von Bismarck.*
SOURCE: *BOBÂRNACUL. FOAIE SATIRIC ŞI UMORISTICĂ* 1, NO. 60 (SEPTEMBER 21, 1878), 4–5.

> ested [in acquiring land across the Danube] and asking us to maintain good relations with them, but with each of us in his own house.[97]

In the face of this strong political resistance, members of the government and other representatives of the ruling Liberal Party had to use all their rhetorical skills to convince the Romanian Parliament to accept Dobrudja's annexation.

97 D.G. Missail, *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 214 (September 27/October 9, 1878): 5435.

The first strategy employed to appease the anti-Dobrudja resistance was to decouple the debate over the province from the loss of Southern Bessarabia. Invoking the exact wording of Article 45 of the Treaty of Berlin—which, unlike the previous Treaty of San Stefano, did not mention the word "exchange" in regard to the two provinces—the Liberal deputies argued that the loss of Southern Bessarabia and the annexation of Dobrudja were two separate diplomatic issues. According to the deputy Grădișteanu,

> In the name of God, do not speak of an exchange anymore; nobody should think for a moment that, even if in Dobrudja rivers of gold and honey would flow, we would accept it in exchange for Bessarabia. But it now remains to be known, purely and simply, if this extension of territory poses an advantage or a danger to the country. It is from this point of view that we should look at this issue [of Dobrudja's annexation].[98]

The issue of the annexation of Dobrudja was thus separated from the loss of Bessarabia. It was presented as a distinct policy issue that had to be decided after weighing the geopolitical advantages and disadvantages it conferred on Romania. "I too believe," said Grădișteanu, "that there can be a danger concerning the annexation of Dobrudja . . . The question of Dobrudja can . . . give Russia an occasion to intervene in our affairs." However, Grădișteanu went on to argue that "If there is a danger in the annexation of Dobrudja, we have to agree that there are also advantages,"[99] such as its strategic geopolitical position in Southeastern Europe: "Don't you see that the affairs of the Orient, which are not yet regulated, can call this country to play an important role? Don't you see that this country, in order to be prepared, needs an open door through which to join hands with Western Europe?"[100]

One of the most committed and skilled proponents of Dobrudja's annexation was Foreign Minister Mihail Kogălniceanu. In two memorable speeches delivered in Parliament on September 28 and 30, 1878, Kogălniceanu highlighted the economic and geopolitical advantages offered by a land with "an immense seacoast and three harbors" and recommended that the deputies invest in "expanding the harbors to develop the wealth of Dobrudja."[101] Most importantly,

98 Grădișteanu, *Monitorul Oficial al României* (September 30/October 12, 1878): 5513.

99 Ibid.

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid., 621.

as a trained historian,[102] Kogălniceanu also crystallized the Romanian nationalist discourse on Dobrudja, based on the historical argument of Wallachia's temporary possession of Dobrudja at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and on the substantial native Romanian population in the province. Finally, Kogălniceanu refuted the fears that Dobrudja would ruin Romania's budget, dismissed concerns that claiming the province could spark conflict with Bulgaria, and set the nationalist priorities of the Romanian administration, pledging that "the only works we will do in Dobrudja will be schools and roads."[103]

Prime Minister Ion C. Brătianu, reversing his earlier position on the issue, became the other leading voice in the pro-annexation campaign. In an eloquent speech, Brătianu underlined the geopolitical and economic advantages offered by possession of Dobrudja and urged Romanian politicians to trust Romania's ability to assimilate Dobrudja:

> And you fear that we will not be able to transform into a Romanian land a province that was previously in our possession? You want to reject a land between the sea and the greatest river in Europe? But other nations would look at it as a hungry man looks at fresh caviar. Every people tends naturally to possess as much sea as it can, and you are refusing it? . . . Do you want us today [. . .] to suffocate, and to lose the sea and the mouth of the Danube?[104]

Brătianu capitalized on Dobrudja's important strategic position on the Lower Danube and the Black Sea, arguing that "By taking Dobrudja we will open a gate through which to communicate with the whole world and with the West."[105] Second, and equally important, Brătianu joined the historian-politician Kogălniceanu in asserting Romania's historical rights to the province, by claiming that Dobrudja was an ancient Romanian land:

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102 On the link between the historical vision of Kogălniceanu and his activity as a foreign minister, see Barbara Jelavich, "Mihail Kogălniceanu: Historian as Foreign Minister, 1876–8," in *Historians as Nation-Builders: Central and South-East Europe*, eds. Dennis Deletant and Harry Hanak (London: MacMillan Press and SSEES, University of London, 1988), 87–105; Catherine Durandin, "La Russie, la Roumanie et les nouvelles frontières dans les Balkans. Les cas de la Dobroudgea," in *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 20, no. 1 (January–March 1979): 61–77.

103 Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 5, part 1, 621, 641.

104 See I.C. Brătianu, "Moțiunea Senatului," in Ion C. Brătianu, *Acte şi cuvîntări*, ed. Georgescu-Tistu, vol. 4 (May 1, 1878–April 30, 1879) (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1932), 103–104.

105 Ion C. Brătianu, *Acte şi cuvîntări*, vol. 4, 103–104.

> For a long time Dobrudja belonged to the Asian invaders, as it was in the way of their migrations, and the last raid was that of the Tartars at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Who drove away the Tartars and who possessed Dobrudja? The Romanians. I defy anyone to come up with a single document to prove that Dobrudja was part of the Bulgarian state. Turkey came at the beginning of the fifteenth century but took it [Dobrudja] from us with the sword, and now when it was recovered from Turkey, it was again taken away with the help of Romania's arm.[106]

From this perspective, Brătianu categorically denied Bulgaria's rights to the province: "Nobody should say that Dobrudja belonged to Bulgaria; we possessed the province by spilling our own blood, we lost it by the sword, and now it returns to us again by the sword."[107] Finally, downplaying the danger of Bulgarian resentment, Brătianu expressed his conviction that

> our Bulgarian neighbors, who while they were independent always lived with us in peace, and who always found shelter with us when they were oppressed by the Turks, who got rich with us and worked here for their liberation—I do not believe that from now on they will not be our friends; they would not turn into enemies, because in that case they would be the most ungrateful nation in the world, by showing hostility toward a nation that spilled its own blood for their liberation.[108]

Mobilized by the determined leadership of Brătianu and Kogălniceanu, the Liberal parliamentary majority succeeded in imposing its view on the future administration of Dobrudja. On September 28, the Senate approved the annexation of the province 48–8, followed, on September 30, by the Chamber of Deputies approving it 83–27. In addition, the Parliament authorized the government to administer Dobrudja through ad hoc governmental regulations until a future assembly passed a law on the new province's definitive administration. Parliament's vote endorsing Dobrudja's annexation demonstrated that, between January and October 1878, the Romanian national discourse on annexing Dobrudja underwent a spectacular transformation, from initial stiff opposition to enthusiastic support. At the time of the Treaty of San Stefano, Dobrudja was to many politicians a foreign province, the symbol of an "onerous bargain," a "fatal gift," or a "geopolitical embarrassment."

106 Brătianu, "Moțiunea Senatului," 102–103.

107 Ibid., 103.

108 Ibid.

By the end of the parliamentary debates over the Treaty of Berlin, Dobrudja was almost unanimously considered an ancient Romanian land and an integral part of the Romanian national heritage. As shown above, this process of myth-making was initiated by the historian-politician Mihail Kogălniceanu, who argued, "Dobrudja is not a Bulgarian land; in every corner we would dig in its soil, we would find the bones, the traces, the graves of our Romanian ancestors."[109] Later, his arguments concerning Romania's historical and ethnic rights in Dobrudja were adopted by a majority of Romanian politicians and dominated the official discourse about the region. Romanian historiography also further developed these theses and transformed them into a full-fledged narrative that was to become an important component of the Romanian national ideology, dominating all subsequent Romanian historical works on Dobrudja.[110]

An important concern of the nationalist discourse about the province was to retrospectively downplay Romanian politicians' initial dilemmas over the acquisition of Dobrudja. The Romanian press portrayed the resistance to annexation as unforgivable ignorance on the part of certain Romanian politicians. Many nationalists even criticized, retrospectively, the Liberal government's failure to negotiate with Russia the annexation of the entire province of Dobrudja.[111]

Another nationalist concern was to obscure the issue of territorial exchange between Dobrudja and Southern Bessarabia. After the war of independence, some authors presented Dobrudja as a war trophy, recompense for Romania's blood sacrifice in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, and compensation for the traumatic loss of southern Bessarabia. Nicolae Iorga, a catalyst of the Romanian national ideology, was to synthesize this opinion evocatively, holding that Dobrudja was "twice dear to the Romanians" because "it was paid for twice: the first time with blood and the second time with territory."[112] Accordingly, the transfer of administrative institutions and personnel from southern Bessarabia to Dobrudja were gestures meant to assert the symbolic continuity between the two provinces.

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109 Kogălniceanu, speech in the Chamber of Deputies, September 30, 1878, in *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 220 (October 4/16, 1878): 5616. See also Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 4, part 1, 639.

110 Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 5, part 1, 639.

111 See, for example, Ioan N. Roman, *Dobrudja şi drepturile politice ale locuitorilor ei* (Constanţa: Ovidiu, 1905), 21.

112 Nicolae Iorga, *Adunarea deputaţilor. Dezbaterile. Sesiunea ordinară 1908–1909* (November 15, 1908), 39, reprinted in Nicolae Iorga, *În Era "Reformelor,"* 306.

In time, this idea was abandoned in Romanian political discourse. However, during the parliamentary debates over the Treaty of Berlin, while Brătianu still openly spoke of Dobrudja as a territorial compensation awarded to Romania for the loss of Southern Bessarabia, other Liberal deputies such as Grădișteanu and Kogălniceanu managed to separate the two issues, in an effort to grant Dobrudja a place of its own in the public discourse. This line of argumentation was further developed in the Romanian national ideology: in the interwar period, Constantin C. Giurescu, another historian-politician, argued that Dobrudja was granted to Romania in 1878 not through a territorial exchange but as a recognition of Romania's legitimate historical rights to the province. He asserted, "Nowhere in the text of the Treaty of Berlin is there the word 'compensation.' Dobrudja was not given to us in exchange for Bessarabia. From a juridical point of view, these were two distinct acts."[113]

The political vocabulary used to refer to Dobrudja's integration into Romania changed over time as well. During the constitutional and parliamentary debates over Dobrudja in 1878–1881, Romanian politicians used the term "annexation," which fully expressed, in their view, Romania's inalienable right to the province, as stipulated by the Treaty of Berlin. For example, in 1879 Vasile Boierescu argued that "if I agreed to eliminate the words 'integral parts' [from the text of the constitution], it was because the words 'annexation' and 'province,' which remained, are equivalent, and are sufficient to show that Dobrudja is an integral part of Romania."[114] During the time, to underscore Romania's historical rights to Dobrudja, the term "annexation" was transformed into "*re*-annexation," thus expressing a historical link with the Wallachian prince Mircea the Old's possession of the province.[115] Later, the term "re-annexation" was abandoned as improper and replaced by the more neutral term "joining" (*alipire*) and then "re-joining" (***re**-alipire*), followed by "re-integration" (***re**-integrare*) or "return" (***re**-venire*) of Dobrudja to the "mother country." Such terms have now become standard in the Romanian historiography on Dobrudja.[116] Moreover, starting in

113 See C.C. Giurescu, "Din istoria nouă a Dobrogei," in I. Andrieşescu et al., *Dobrudja: patru conferinţe ale Universitaţii libere* (Bucharest, 1928).

114 Vasile Boerescu, *Discursuri Politice, 1859–1883*, vol. 2, *1874–1883* (Bucharest: Socec, 1910), 965.

115 For an example, see Constantin Moisil, "13 Martie 1916," in *Arhiva Dobrogei*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Tipografia Jockey Club, 1916), 7.

116 See, for example, *Dobrudja: 1878–1928. Cincizeci de ani de viață românească. Publicație tipărită cu prilejul semicentenarului **re**anexării Dobrogei* [emphasis added] (1928). On the terms describing the "joining" (*alipire*) and "rejoining" (***re**alipire*) of Dobrudja to the "mother country" (*patria mumă*), see *Cuvântările Regelui Carol I, 1866–1914*, ed. Constantin

the communist period, some historians presented the union of Dobrudja with Romania as the second stage in the creation of the Romanian nation-state, thus placing the 1878 annexation of the province on a par with the 1859 union of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, and with the 1918 union of Transylvania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia with Romania.[117]

The Sentry of Civilization in the Orient: Romania's "Civilizing" Mission in Dobrudja

The integration of Dobrudja into Romanian national ideology marked a fundamental transformation of the Romanians' collective identity and "symbolic geography." If, until 1878, Romania was formally under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire and its territorial integrity was guaranteed by the European Great Powers, the achievement of the country's independence and the annexation of Dobrudja changed the way Romanians thought about themselves and their political role in Europe. The transformation of Romania's foreign policy principles was directly linked to the country's control over the Lower Danube and the Danube Delta and its contribution to protecting Western political and commercial interests in the region.

After 1878, Romanian political elites promoted a "role concept" in foreign policy, informed by their national history and myths and based upon a sense of national identity and understanding of the country's "place in the world."[118] In the country's international status, as in its domestic administration, Romanian political elites wished to emulate Belgium, a buffer zone between three European Great Powers, whose perpetual neutrality was guaranteed by a collective European agreement. Belgium's great economic and political development in the nineteenth century was generally attributed to the country's liberal constitution and neutral diplomatic status, which made it a political model

C. Giurescu, vol. 2, *1887–1914* (Bucharest: Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă "Regele Carol II," 1939), 395, 482.

117 For a recent example, see the volume celebrating 130 years since "the union of the largest part of the province of Dobrudja to the Romanian state": Valentin Ciorbea, ed., *Dobrudja 1878–2008. Orizonturi deschise de mandatul european* (Constanța: Ex Ponto, 2008). This massive volume revives the theme of Romania's European mandate over Dobrudja, which had been the leading theme of the 1878 parliamentary debates but was subsequently marginalized.

118 On this notion, see my discussion in the introduction and footnotes 19–20.

for most of the newly emerging nation-states in the Balkans. Consequently, Romanian politicians portrayed their country as "a new Christian state," a "new Belgium of the Orient," "the border of the West" in the East, and "a solid point of order and political equilibrium in Oriental Europe."[119] The central aim of Romania's "role concept" was to reconcile the country's Eastern geographic position with its Western political affiliation, by claiming that, though situated in "the Orient," Romania had a pivotal role in spreading the values of European civilization and guaranteeing order and stability in the eastern part of Europe. Prime Minister Brătianu evocatively expressed Romania's efforts to play the leading political role in the region:

> Since God settled us in the Orient, we Romanians cannot separate ourselves from it; we are an Oriental power, and we will strive to preserve here a great and dignifying role, with which to attract the interest of the entire Orient and to be blessed by the West.[120]

Due to its geopolitical position, Dobrudja was at the very heart of this critical reassessment of Romania's political role in the Balkans, as it was closely linked to the evolution of the "Danube Question" at the 1878 Congress of Berlin. As part of its general political reorganization of Southeastern Europe, the Congress devoted special attention to the international status of the Danube, regarding its neutrality as a milestone of the new political architecture in the region. The main concern of the Congress was to devise a package of measures meant to compensate for Russia's reacquisition of Southern Bessarabia and thus to preserve the neutrality of the river. It was to this end that the Treaty of Berlin granted Dobrudja and the Danube Delta to Romania and accepted the country as a full member of the European Commission of the Danube. Apparently, the Congress chose Romania for two main reasons. First the emerging newly independent state was ideally positioned geographically to serve as a buffer state among the Great Powers that dominated the region and to prevent unilateral domination of the river. Second, as a "weak state," Romania could neither oppose the internationalization of the Danube nor attempt to nationalize the river. The Treaty of Berlin could thus safely maintain and even expand the prerogatives of the European Commission of the Danube. According to Article 53 of the Treaty of Berlin, in spite of the fact that the Commission operated by that time solely on Romanian territory, it worked "in complete independence of territorial authorities." Significantly, this extraterritorial

119 Vasile Boerescu, "The Program of Foreign Policy of the Conservative Party," in Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 4, part 1, 515.

120 Ion C. Brătianu, *Acte şi cuvîntări*, vol. 4, 103.

status did not apply to the Russian sector of the river, where local legislation took priority over international stipulations.[121] Regardless of the controversies over the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the European Commission of the Danube, the Treaty of Berlin granted Romania possession of Dobrudja and the Danube Delta, and through it, strategic control over the maritime Danube. Romania thus became the center of the "Danubian question" and a factor in the "European equilibrium" in Eastern Europe.

Romanian political elites were keen to speculate on the important role that Romania acquired in the maintenance of political equilibrium in Eastern Europe. They pointed out the relationship between Romania's possession of Dobrudja and the country's new geopolitical role. In the words of Prime Minister Brătianu:

> Dobrudja was imposed on us by Europe. You all refused it, we protested and did not want to accept it, but it was imposed on us due to the European interest in the mouth of the Danube. Gentlemen, Europe does not make gifts to any nation unless it is in the direct European interest. . . . Europe gave us Dobrudja because it saw that we are a strong nation, distinguished and full of vigor, with our own national character, different from all the nations in the Orient. It gave us the province because it is in Europe's interest that the mouth of the Danube is in the hands of a people who can assure the liberty of the Danube.[122]

In the same vein, while crystallizing the Romanian nationalist discourse about Dobrudja, Kogălniceanu connected the annexation of the province to Romania's European and civilizing vocation: Dobrudja was "a land given [us] by Europe and [one] that sets us in contact with Western Europe."[123] In his view, Romania's control over Dobrudja and the Danube Delta was the country's main asset in its effort to become a Western (anti-Russian) military bastion, a guarantor of political stability in Eastern Europe, and an essential link in the commercial transit between the Occident and the Orient. "Insignificant" Dobrudja thus generated a major geopolitical reassessment of Romania. This accounts for the main paradox of its integration process: one would expect that the annexation of the province would consolidate Romania's Balkan component. Instead, Romanian national ideology proclaimed that the integration of Dobrudja strengthened Romania's links to the West. Prime Minister Brătianu evocatively expressed this idea:

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121 Frucht, *Dunarea Noastra*, 23.

122 Ion C. Brătianu, *Acte şi cuvîntări*, vol. 4, 144.

123 Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 4, part 1, 620.

> We are not a Balkan state, either politically or geographically. Fortunately, we long ago overcame the convulsions that are still experienced by our neighbors from the Balkan peninsula; and geographically, we have a distinct position, which symbolizes the uniqueness of our situation: *we are at the mouth of the Danube, but mandated here by the Occident*.[124]

In the long run, this perspective generated a phenomenon of "nesting Orientalism":[125] Dobrudja was stigmatized, according to a collective symbolic geography, as a backward, uncivilized part of the Orient—and it was Romania's noble "European mission" to introduce high culture in the province, in order to extend the boundaries of the West in the Balkans.[126]

This self-legitimizing narrative was used to justify the program of assimilation, modernization, and administrative colonization implemented in Dobrudja. Luca Ionescu, a prefect in Dobrudja, eloquently expressed this idea in 1904:

> We have come here to resume the thread of Romanian life, to rejoin our brothers who have been severed from the bosom of the motherland . . . But at the same time, we have come here to bring the torch of civilization to all the peoples of this province, even to those who, for so many centuries, reigned over our sons by force and constraint. . . . No more political clubs, no more secret committees, no more collections of funds, no more articles in foreign newspapers, no more open or concealed attempts to disturb public order or to foster agitation against us, here or elsewhere.[127]

Ionescu's discourse, articulated a quarter-century after the annexation of the province, reconfirms the close affiliation between nationalism based on historical rights, modernization, and strong bureaucratic control in the administration of Dobrudja. It also hints at the fear Romanian political elites had of

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124 *Discursurile lui Ion I.C. Brătianu*, vol. 2, *December 1903–January 1909* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1932), 629–631, emphasis added.

125 On the concept of Orientalism, see Edward Said's groundbreaking book *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979). A recent work on the Balkans identified Orientalist patterns in the center-periphery narrative within individual political units. See Robert Hayden and Milica Hayden, "Orientalist Variations on the Theme 'Balkans': Symbolic Geographies in Yugoslav Cultural Politics," *Slavic Review* 51, no. 1 (1992): 1–15.

126 See Alexandre A.C. Sturdza, *La Roumanie moderne comme facteur de la civilisation en Orient* (Paris: Librairie J. Rothschild, 1902).

127 Luca Ionescu, *Judeţul Tulcea. Dare de seamă prezentată consiliul judeţean* (Bucharest: Aurora, 1904), 362.

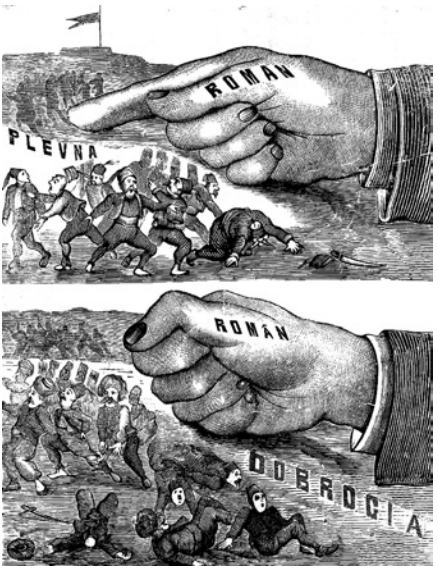

FIGURE 5.2
"A Message to the Bulgarians of Dobrudja" (Spre sciinţa Bulgarilor din Dobrudja). *In the first picture, a large hand flicks away the Ottomans occupying the Plevna Redoubt—a reference to Romania's contribution to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in 1877–1878 Russo-Turkish War. In the second picture, the Romanian fist scatters away the Bulgarian malcontents. The caption reads: "In Plevna, where he was liberating you from slavery to the Turk, the Romanian has merely shown his finger, and Plevna capitulated. If you rebel in Dobrudja, the Romanian, acting in the name of Europe, will pull out his FIST, and Dobrudja will submit."*
SOURCE: *BOBÂRNACUL. FOAIE SATIRIC ŞI UMORISTICĂ* 1, NO. 62 (SEPTEMBER 28, 1878), 4.

Dobrudja's multiethnic population. For many politicians, the province was a *refugium peccatorum* of a rebellious population*, a terra incognita* of geopolitical complications, and a "Pandora's box" of acute nationalist conflicts with the "hostile surrounding elements."[128]

In summary, politicians in newly independent Romania faced the challenge of reconciling their national aspirations with the *realpolitik* agenda of the Great Powers on the one hand, and with the emerging European public law based on liberal standards of parliamentary democracy and minority rights on the other. Their political discourses were based on the concept of national rights and self-determination, closely interwoven with interrelated notions such as "Europe," "civil society," and the "Latin race" (*ginta latină*). In the parliamentary debates over Dobrudja, Romanian politicians used the concept of "Europe" with two main meanings. The first meaning referred to the emerging modern European civil society, metaphorically called the "European Aeropagus," meaning the great family of European states who shared the prevailing Western European civilizational norms and standards of political administration. Second, the concept of "Europe" was used to denote the "Concert of Great Powers." Although the two notions, the "European Aeropagus" and the Concert of Powers, were interrelated and often used as synonyms, Romanian politicians were careful to differentiate between the two.

128 Carp, "Propunera de revizuire si chestiunea evreiasca," speech in the Senate in February 1879, in *Discursuri Parlamentare*, 81.

First, they attempted to play the Great Powers off against each other, capitalizing on Romania's symbolic belonging to the "Latin race" and exploiting the growing French-German political rift and the anti-Russian feelings developing in the West. Second, when the interests of the Great Powers ran contrary to Romania's national interests, Romanian politicians did not hesitate to reiterate to the Great Powers that the concept of natural rights was inalienable in international law, and to declare the latter's imperialist actions to be unjust, on the grounds that they ran contrary to prevailing European civilizational norms. Over time, these political tensions led to the abandonment of certain aspects of the Western standard of human rights (most notably, the emancipation of Jews, which in Romania was postponed indefinitely), a process accompanied by the emergence of political stances against the Great Powers. Although at the time of the debates over Dobrudja, these critical discourses on the Great Powers' politics in the region were not anti-Western in nature, explicit anti-Western feelings did emerge amid the 1878–1879 parliamentary debates on the external intervention to emancipate the Jews. Another concern was Romania's relationship to the neighboring countries, since Romania's adherence to the principle of nationality implied that it would not try to extend its territory beyond the nation's ethnic borders. In the end, however, geopolitical pragmatism and *realpolitik* prevailed over normative considerations. "Let us pursue our own interest and not worry over the issue of Bulgarians' ingratitude!" Kogălniceau argued in the Romanian Parliament. "Today we cannot survive without the sea, because if we do not have sea we do not have the Danube, this is certain."[129]

Up in Arms: The Romanian-Bulgarian Conflict over Dobrudja, 1913–1918

The Balkan Wars and the Romanian-Bulgarian Conflict over Southern Dobrudja (1912–1913)

At Varna we will find Transylvania, at Varna lie the dreams of our people.
MIHAIL R. STURDZA, *"Transilvania la Varna,"* December 1912[130]

129 Kogălniceanu, September 30, 1878, in *Monitorul Oficial al României*, no. 220 (October 4/16, 1878): 5615.

130 Sturdza, "Transilvania la Varna," in B.G. Assan, *Quadrilaterul românesc. Rusiuc-Varna-Şumla-Silistra* (Bucharest, 1912), 56.

In 1912, the Balkan Peninsula entered a period of turmoil that was to last until 1922, completely transforming the region's political status quo. The decade was marked by three distinct yet interrelated conflicts: the two Balkan wars (1912–1913), the Great War (1914–1918), and the Greek-Turkish War (1919–1922). This period of turmoil coincided with a grave crisis in international affairs generated by the acute conflict among the Great Powers over hegemony. During the First Balkan War, taking advantage of the military rivalry and diplomatic tensions among the Great Powers, the Balkan states tried to settle their claims on Ottoman territory by themselves. On September 26/October 9, 1912, a Balkan Alliance made up of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro attacked the Ottoman Empire. The Alliance's easy victory resulted in territorial aggrandizement at the expense of the Ottomans, reinforced by the Treaty of London (1912). Soon, however, the division of the former Ottoman territory unleashed local rivalries that led to a general conflict among the former allies during the Second Balkan War, settled by the Peace of Bucharest (1913).

Romania proclaimed its neutrality in the First Balkan War. Developments in the war were, however, of deep concern to Romanian politicians and public opinion.[131] The defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the expansion of Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria reconfigured the territorial status quo established by the Treaty of Berlin, with an immediate effect on interstate relations in the region. Despite Romania's declared neutrality, the outcome of the war and the subsequent divergences between the Balkan allies prompted intense political debates over the impact of these events on Romania's geopolitical position and international status, and on the appropriate political attitude and policy of alliances for the country. The war raised three pressing political issues to the top of Romania's foreign policy agenda. These were the adjustment of the border in Dobrudja in Romania's favor; concerns for the military equilibrium in the Balkans; and concerns for the status of the ethnic Romanians living in the Balkans, who, as a result of the territorial changes in the region, went from living under the imperial order of the Ottoman Empire to the homogenizing order of the Balkan national states.[132] Given its geographical position, Dobrudja lay at the very heart of the intense political debates generated in Romania by the Balkan wars. As in 1878, Dobrudja

131 For the most comprehensive treatment of the public debates surrounding Romania's participation in the Balkan Wars, see Gheorghe Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913. Pagini de istorie sud-est europeană* (Bucharest: Albatros, 1999).

132 For Romania's main political concerns, see Titu Maiorescu, *România, Războaiele Balcanice şi Cadrilaterul* (Bucharest: Machiavelli, 1995), 194.

became yet again "the vital question" of Romania's foreign policy and a major catalyst of Romanian national ideology.

First, the adjustment of the common frontier in Dobrudja had dominated diplomatic relations between Romania and Bulgaria ever since the aftermath of the Congress of Berlin (1878).[133] As previously mentioned, in accordance with Article 11 of the Treaty—which stipulated that the frontier of the principality of Bulgaria would be set by a special European Commission—Article 46 stated that the exact itinerary of the Romanian-Bulgarian frontier "will be drawn on the field by the European Commission instituted for the delimitation of Bulgaria."[134]

However, the European Commission that met in 1879 to define the Romanian-Bulgarian frontier in Dobrudja worked in a particularly tense atmosphere. The difficulties mainly concerned the fact that, as a state border slicing the province in two for purely political reasons, the boundary established by the Treaty of Berlin was not supported by any natural delimitation or barrier. Thus it was particularly insecure from a military point of view. As a result, after 1878 Romania and Bulgaria tried to influence the European Commission and to obtain on the ground the best possible solution to their security interests.

The Romanian side was particularly upset that the frontier drawn by the Treaty of Berlin denied Romania the city of Silistra, the possession of which was considered important for several reasons.[135] First, Romanian politicians argued that at Silistra the Danube river was narrower and offered the only favorable sector for building a bridge between Dobrudja and Romania proper. Upriver from Silistra, the Danube splits into two irregular branches divided by large islands and swamps, making the construction of a bridge particularly difficult and expensive. Second, Romanian politicians claimed that, militarily, Silistra was the "key" to all of Dobrudja, allowing strategic control over the territory of Northern Dobrudja. Consequently, without Silistra, the Romanian frontier was allegedly vulnerable to foreign attack. Third, Romania's claims on

133 On the diplomatic complications concerning setting the Romanian-Bulgarian frontier in Dobrudja, see Georges Bibesco, *Histoire d'une frontière. La Roumanie sure la rive droite du Danube* (Paris: E. Plon, 1883).

134 Ibid.

135 For a good summary of Romania's motivations for claiming Silistra, see "Memoriul Guvernului român asupra diferendului româno-bulgar," Bucharest, February 15/28, 1913, in Maiorescu, *România*, 193–201.

Silistra were also based on ethnicity: the Romanian community in the city was estimated at 2,500, as compared to 1,500 Bulgarians and 7,000 Muslims.[136]

In view of these arguments, Romanian diplomats expressed disapproval with the border solution stipulated by the Treaty of Berlin, during numerous rounds of negotiations with the Russian administration in Dobrudja and with the European Commission. After the Russian army withdrew from Dobrudja, Romania and Bulgaria established their own common commission that carried out new rounds of border negotiations in 1884–1886. Finally, on September 5, 1902, the two countries signed a concluding agreement regarding the delimitation of their common territorial frontier in Dobrudja, without meeting the minimal Romanian concerns for military security.[137]

After the First Balkan War, Romania's resentment over Dobrudja's southern border was amplified by Bulgaria's substantial territorial expansion. Consequently, Romanian politicians regarded the revision of the Romanian-Bulgarian frontier in Dobrudja as necessary to increase Romania's military security and to restore geopolitical equilibrium in the Balkans. Several political positions can be identified regarding the adjustment of the Dobrudjan border. The most minimal demand was the acquisition of Silistra. Other proposals demanded that the frontier be adjusted on the line of 1) Turtucaia-Balcik, 2) Silistra-Cavarna, or 3) Silistra-Balcik. The most far-reaching demand claimed the entire province of Southern Dobrudja up to the Rusciuk-Varna line. This expansion was motivated by a combination of historical, geopolitical, and economic arguments and occasioned prolonged debate over the Romanian national identity and the country's path of development.

Thus the Balkan Wars generated debate not only on Romania's frontier in Dobrudja but also on the "ethnic frontiers" of the nation, highlighting the underlying foreign policy dilemmas of Romanian politicians concerning the expansion of the Romanian nation-state eastward and northeastward, into Bessarabia and Bukovina; westward, into Transylvania and the Banat; or southward, into Southern Dobrudja and the Balkans. Given Romania's limited human and military potential, these foreign policy options were seen—with few but notable exceptions—as mutually exclusive. Thus in Romania there was a dual tension—first, between the country's Balkan versus Central European "vocation," and second, between an ethnic policy versus economic imperatives.

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136 Colonel Hume, in "The Protocole No. VIII," Constantinople, November 26, 1878, quoted in Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen, *La Dobrogea* (*Dobroudja*)*: Essai Historique, Économique, Ethnographique et Politique* (Lausanne: Payot, 1918), 83.

137 Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913*, 203.

In the debates on Romania's foreign policy occasioned by the Balkan Wars, one side pushed for a union between Romania and the historical provinces of Transylvania, the Banat, and Bukovina, which were then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The champion of Romania's irredentist policy toward Austria-Hungary was Nicolae Iorga, the president of the Nationalist-Democrat Party. A prominent historian of the young generation with a multifaceted personality, Iorga engaged in politics "through nationalist impulses."[138] He expressed the spirit of Romanian national militance in his *Semănătorist* cultural nationalism, an original combination of Romantic and populist convictions. Understanding history to be a political weapon in the service of the national cause, Iorga mobilized historical arguments and national symbols in his campaign for the achievement of national union.

On the eve of World War I, Iorga became one of the most active supporters of military action against Austria-Hungary in Transylvania to achieve national union. To be sure, Iorga also supported Romania adopting an active policy in the Balkans and envisioned Romania as an "arbiter" of stability in the region.[139] Nevertheless, for Iorga, Romania's Balkan policy was of secondary importance. He regarded the most important objective of Romanian foreign policy as the union of Transylvania and the Old Kingdom. Convinced that Romania could not fight on two different military fronts, Iorga came to see the territorial issue of Southern Dobrudja as potentially preventing Romania's acquisition of Transylvania: "a war with Bulgaria would be an enormous obstacle to the fulfillment of our national ideals. We will not be able to move in the north, since we will always have to stay with our eyes focused on the south."[140] Consequently, Iorga urged that Romania's Balkan policy be abandoned: "We do not have anything to do in the Balkans. We have to go to Austria" in order to proceed "on the grand route opened by our forebears, and not on the three-kilometer road of Silistra."[141]

On the other side of this debate were those who argued for a reorientation of Romania's attention toward the Balkans, which they saw as the only way to promote the long-term national interest. Although they used as a point of departure the Romanian-Bulgarian controversy over the frontier in Dobrudja, the advocates of Romania's Balkan policy went even further, arguing that

138 Nicolas M. Nagy-Talavera, *Nicolae Iorga: A Biography* (Jassy, Portland, and Oxford: Center for Romanian Studies, 1998), 92.

139 See Iorga, *Românii şi noua stare de lucruri in Orient* (1912). See also the program of the National-Democrat Party in Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913*, 100–101.

140 Cited in Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913*, 137.

141 Ibid.

Romania needed to expand into the Balkans in view of the ethnic Romanian population in the region. An active supporter of Romania's expansion in the Balkans was Liga Culturală a Românilor and its newspaper *Românismul*. Represented by prominent cultural personalities such as Vasile Pârvan, George Vâlsan, Pericle Papahagi, Gheorghe Bogdan-Duică, Virgil Arion, and Bogdan Ştefanescu-Delavrancea, Liga was concerned mainly with the status of the Romanians from the Balkans and sought to "draw the attention of domestic and international public opinion to their situation."[142] To this end, Liga worked in close collaboration with the *Societatea de Cultură macedo-română*, organizing a strong media campaign, supported by regular conferences, demonstrations, and numerous brochures and pamphlets. They argued for Romania to take military action against Bulgaria and to engage in strong diplomatic intervention in support of Macedo-Romanians.[143]

One of the most vocal advocates of extending Romania's border in Southern Dobrudja through military action was the archeologist and university professor Vasile Pîrvan. However, Pîrvan based his argument not on the need to defend ethnic Romanians but on the country's vital economic interests:

> The harbor of Constanţa cannot satisfy us. We urgently need Varna, which is, after Odessa, the best Black Sea port. In addition, a more important factor justifies our insistence on a frontier on the line Rusciuk-Varna . . . The straightest way to the Orient is London-Vienna-Budapest-Bucharest-Varna, and it is necessary that the terminus point of this way toward the sea belongs to us.[144]

Pîrvan held that there were no inherent Bulgarian national rights to the province. In his view, the Quadrilater had always been a territory of colonization, and thus "no people has autochthonous rights there."[145]

A more straightforward economic argument for Romania's expansion in Southern Dobrudja was put forward by the Liberal industrialist and deputy B.G. Assan. In a 1912 book, Assan pleaded for the annexation of the Quadrilater by Romania based on economic—and not ethnic—arguments. Assan compared

142 See the meeting of the League from October 27, 1912, in *Universul*, October 28, 1912, cited by Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913*, 103.

143 Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913*, 95.

144 Pîrvan, "Stăpînirea Mării-Negre. De ce vrem teritoriul Rusciuk-Varna?" in *Românismul*, quoted in Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913*, 107–108.

145 Pîrvan, "Prietenia noastra cu Bulgaria viitoare," December 14, 1912, quoted in Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913*, 108.

the economic expansion of Romania in the region to the colonial expansion of England and Austria-Hungary.[146] Due to this concerted lobby, leading Romanian politicians started regarding Romania's expansion into Southern Dobrudja as a necessary continuation of the successful strategy of economic development implemented in Northern Dobrudja.

The outbreak of the Second Balkan War gave Romania an opportunity to impose a military solution on the issue. On June 16/29, 1913, Bulgarian troops attacked Serbia and Greece but were soon to confront a larger military coalition also joined by Montenegro and Turkey. On June 27/July 10, 1913, amidst heavy fighting between the Bulgarian and Serbian armies, Romania declared war on Bulgaria and entered the Second Balkan War. After Romanian troops marched unimpeded toward Sofia, Bulgaria capitulated and acceded to the Romanian demands. The Peace Conference of Bucharest (July 16/29–July 28/August 10, 1913), with the participation of Romania, Greece, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bulgaria, put an end to the war and confirmed the new territorial status quo in the Balkans. Invoking geopolitical imperatives, Romania annexed Southern Dobrudja (the Quadrilater), made up of the counties of Durostor and Caliacra.[147]

The 1913 Treaty of Bucharest confirmed Romania's leading geopolitical role as a regional power broker. The Romanian press celebrated the annexation of Southern Dobrudja as the reunification of Dobrudja. In practice, however, this annexation changed the dynamics of the Romanian-Bulgarian relationship, triggering Bulgaria's military retaliation. Romania's participation in the Second Balkan War was thus the prelude to a bloody conflict with Bulgaria over Dobrudja during World War I. This military confrontation had a great impact on the post-1918 ethnic composition and economic development of the province.

146 See Assan, "Quadrilaterul românesc. Rusiuc-Varna-Şumla-Silistra," quoted in Zbuchea, *România şi războaiele balcanice, 1912–1913*, 105–106.

147 Maiorescu, the prime minister during the Balkan Wars, provided a rich account of Romania's diplomatic activity just before and during these events, in Maiorescu, *România, Războaiele Balcanice şi Cadrilaterul*. See also Ministerul Afacerilor Străine, *Documente diplomatice: evenimentele din Peninsula Balcanică: acţiunea României: 20 septemvrie 1912–1 august 1913. Documents diplomatiques: les événements de la Péninsule Balkanique: l'action de la Roumanie: 20 septembre 1912–1 août 1913* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, 1913).

The Dobrudjan Question during the Great War: The Central Powers' Dobrudjan Campaign (1916–1917) and the Treaty of Bucharest (1918)

In 1914, a new war erupted in the Balkans between Serbia and Austria-Hungary, a conflict that would soon expand to the entire continent and even beyond it. During the Balkan Wars, local states had had wide political latitude that left room for inter-allied conflicts. However, during the Great War the Balkan states were forced to join larger military blocs and to straitjacket their national aims into the geopolitical interests and discourses of the Great Powers. Reflecting the military evolution on the Balkan and Eastern fronts, in May 1918 the status of Dobrudja was temporarily shaped by the Central Powers and then, in the longer term, by the victorious Entente coalition, as part of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference.

Bulgaria and Romania joined the Great War on opposing sides with the aim of fulfilling their national aspirations, which revolved mainly around Macedonia and Transylvania, respectively. To fulfill its territorial goals, which were massively frustrated during the Second Balkan War, Bulgaria joined the Central Powers and became part of a quadruple military alliance that also included Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire. Bulgaria entered the war ahead of Romania, on October 11, 1915, when it declared war against Serbia with the aim of occupying Vardar Macedonia. Romania, in turn, joined the Entente Powers, an alliance made up of Russia, Great Britain, and France. On August 25, 1916, Romania declared war on Austria-Hungary with the aim of acquiring Transylvania and the Banat.

Although Dobrudja played a marginal role in Romania's and Bulgaria's initial war plans, the province was soon to become a battlefield. Following Romania's offensive in Transylvania, the German Empire declared war on Romania on August 27. Urged by its allies, Bulgaria did the same on September 1, 1916, in a letter that Prime Minister Vasil Radoslavov sent to the Romanian minister in Sofia.[148] A joint German-Bulgarian-Ottoman military force was organized south of the Danube with the aim of occupying Dobrudja and advancing toward Bucharest. It was placed under the command of Field Marshal August von Mackensen, who was transferred from the Macedonian front to lead the offensive against Romania. A main component of this multinational unit, called the Army Group Mackensen, consisted of the Bulgarian Third Army under the command of Lieutenant General Stefan Toshev.

148 *Declarations of War, Severances of Diplomatic Relations 1914–1918* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1919), 13–15.

The Central Powers opened their military offensive against Romania with a stunning success at Tutrakan (Romanian: Turtucaia, Bulgarian: Тутракан) at the beginning of September, which eliminated much of the Third Romanian Army and the allied Forty-Seventh Russian Army Corps under the overall command of Russian general Andrei Zayonchkovski. The battle had an immediate impact on Romania's campaign in Transylvania; Romania halted its successful offensive by September 15 in order to strengthen the Southern Danubian front, which was on the brink of collapse. This suspension gave the Austro-Hungarian troops and the German divisions led by General Erich von Falkenhayn time to regroup and take the military initiative in Transylvania as well. By the end of September 1916, Romania was forced onto the defensive on both fronts. The Central Powers seized Dobrudja and the entire province of Wallachia, including the capital, Bucharest, conquered on December 6, 1916.

A year later, following the Battle of Mărăşeşti (August–September 1917), Romania finally managed to stabilize the front and to hold onto the northeastern part of the country, made up of the larger part of the province of Moldavia, with Iaşi serving as a temporary capital. Yet the defection of Russia on the Eastern Front, following the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution on October 25/November 7, 1917, placed Romania in a very vulnerable military position. After Soviet Russia signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Central Powers on March 3, 1918, Romania—threatened with imminent invasion by the Central Powers and aware it could not sustain the Eastern Front alone—was forced to sign a preliminary peace at Buftea on March 5, 1918, and to enter final talks toward a separate peace with the Central Powers.[149]

The peace conditions were subject to harsh negotiations with Germany and Austria-Hungary, the leading forces of the quadruple military alliance. The two powers sought to eliminate Romania as a military factor in the region, as retaliation for Romania invalidating its prewar diplomatic alliance with the Central Powers. At the regional level, Germany and Austria-Hungary also wanted to secure their domination over the Lower Danube and the Black Sea, at the

149 For behind-the-scenes insights into the peace negotiations, see the accounts of Minister of Justice Constantin Argetoianu, Romania's chief negotiator: *Memorii. Pentru cei de mâine: amintiri din vremea celor de ieri, Partea a V-a 1918. Anexe documentare 1916–1918*, vol. 5 (Bucharest: Machiavelli, 1995); and Alexandru Marghiloman, *Note Politice, 1897–1924*, vol. 3: *1917–1918* (Bucharest: Editura Institutului de Arte Grafice Eminescu, 1927). The appendices of Argetoianu's book include valuable diplomatic notes with details on Bulgaria's peace conditions.

expense of the Entente Powers.[150] The peace negotiations occasioned a "grand fight over Dobrudja"[151] between the Romanian and Bulgarian diplomatic positions, within the rigid constraints set by the two Great Powers that dominated the region. Romania tried to achieve three main objectives during the peace talks. First, it sought to save the throne of King Ferdinand of Hohenzollern, which Germany openly contested after Romania's German monarch committed the "treason" of joining the Entente. Second, it sought to safeguard its territorial integrity by keeping Dobrudja. Third, it sought to prevent the total destruction of its army, whose support was considered critical if fighting resumed.[152] Aware that, due to Romania's vulnerable geopolitical position, the country could not fulfill this maximal agenda, political factions were divided over the priorities of Romania's foreign policy agenda. The pro-Entente side, represented by Ion I.C. Brătianu (prime minister January 4, 1914–January 26, 1918) and then by his successor, General Alexandru Averescu (January 29–March 4, 1918), stepped aside to allow more favorable negotiations under a pro-German government led by Alexandru Averescu (March 5–October 23, 1918). The new prime minister, Marghiloman, prioritized the salvaging of the Hohenzollern dynasty, while also militating, as much as possible, for the preservation of Dobrudja. Another pro-German faction led by Constantin Stere and Petre P. Carp favored the dethronement of King Ferdinand, considering it an unavoidable concession to Germany and necessary for the preservation of Dobrudja.[153] To this end, they organized anti-dynastic demonstrations in Iași, pleading at the same time for a "peace without annexations," which would allow Romania to retain Dobrudja.[154]

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150 For an overview of the military campaign in Dobrudja and the German administration in the province, see *Bilder aus der Dobrudscha. Herausgegeben von der Deutschen Etappen-Verwaltung in der Dobrudscha in eigenem Verlag* (Constanza, 1918). For a recent translation in Romanian, see *Bilder aus der Dobrudscha 1916–1918. Imagini din Dobrogea 1916–1918*, trans. Gustav Rückert (Constanţa: Ex Ponto, 2011).

151 Marghilom, *Note Politice*, 368.

152 Ibid., 347–348.

153 For Constantin Stere's view on Romania's foreign policy, see the articles published during the war in the newspaper *Lumina*, collected in *Marele războiu şi politica României* (Bucharest: Atelierele societăţii anonime "Poporul," 1918).

154 Marghilom, *Note Politice*, 349. The debate pitting the pro-dynastic and pro-Entente political faction against the anti-dynastic politicians who favored an alliance with the Central Powers continued throughout the war. See, for example, Alexandru Lupașcu, "Antidinasticismul D-lui D.S. Nenițescu," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 193 (July 20, 1918): 1; and Nicolae Iorga, "Ideile d-lui Stere," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 223 (August 14, 1918): 1.

Bulgaria

World War I gave Bulgaria an opportunity to fulfill its national aspirations. As is well known, the course of Bulgarian nationalism was decisively influenced by the borders of Bulgaria stipulated under the Treaty of San Stefano: although it was not implemented, the treaty set Bulgaria's long-term national territorial goals.[155] In the case of Dobrudja, however, the frame of reference was slightly different, as under the Treaty of San Stefano, Bulgaria was awarded only Southern Dobrudja, with Northern Dobrudja assigned to Romania. To argue for the awarding of Northern Dobrudja as well, Bulgarian politicians and national activists used a combination of religious and diplomatic arguments; invoked the borders of the Bulgarian exarchate created in 1871, which extended into Dobrudja as well;[156] and cited the 1876 Conference of Constantinople, which recommended the inclusion of all of Dobrudja into the would-be new Bulgarian state (see above). After 1878, Bulgaria monitored the fate of the Bulgarian minority in Romania, trying to defend its collective interests vis-à-vis the Romanian state. Romania's annexation of Southern Dobrudja in 1913 caused grave resentment in Bulgaria, greatly stimulating irredentist plans to acquire all of Dobrudja.

During World War I, Bulgaria attempted to capitalize on the Central Powers' rapid military victory in Dobrudja and Romania's vulnerable geopolitical position in order to annex the entire province. The proclamation of Prime Minister Vasil Radoslavov accompanying the declaration of war on Romania is revealing in this respect. After accusing Romania of "treacherous" behavior during the Second Balkan War, "humiliating us and depriving us of our dear Dobrudja, the nucleus of our kingdom," Radoslavov urged the Bulgarians to "destroy this violent neighbor, to secure the unity of the Bulgarian people, which was achieved at the cost of so many sacrifices, and to free our brothers in the Dobrudja from slavery."[157] Soon after the occupation of Dobrudja, King Ferdinand of Bulgaria visited the region, reportedly behaving like the sover-

155 For overviews on Bulgarian nationalism, see Marin V. Pundeff, "Bulgarian Nationalism," in *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, eds. Ivo J. Lederer and Peter F. Sugar (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), 93–165; and Maria Todorova, "The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism," in *Eastern European Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter F. Sugar (Lanham, MD: American University Press, 1995), 70–88.

156 On the extension of the Bulgarian exarchate in Dobrudja, see Tudor Mateescu, "Les Diocèses Orthodoxes de la Dobroudja sous la domination ottomane," *Balkan Studies* 13 (1972), esp. 299.

157 *Declarations of War*, 15.

eign of a liberated territory, in an attempt to suggest that the Bulgarian jurisdiction over Dobrudja was a *fait accompli*.

In parallel with the ongoing military operations, Bulgaria initiated an intensive propaganda campaign at home and abroad in support of its annexation of Dobrudja. The main animator of this campaign was the Dobrudja Organization in Bulgaria, created in Sofia in 1913, by Bulgarian refugees from Southern Dobrudja after that province's annexation by Romania, with the aim of "liberating" Dobrudja.[158] The wartime activity of the Dobrudja Organization (which existed until 1919) was greatly stimulated by the military victory of the Central Powers against Romania. To create the foundation for the pro-annexation campaign, on March 14, 1917, the Bulgarian Army and the Dobrudja Organization launched a complex study expedition in Northern Dobrudja, following the example of similar expeditions sent to Macedonia and Pomoraví in the summer of 1916, and building also on two preliminary reports by army experts.[159] The Dobrudjan expedition was coordinated by Lieutenant Milan D. Markov, prosecutor in the Military Field Court and professor of social sciences at the Military Academy of Sofia, who was to act as a key advocate of the Dobrudjan cause, authoring two major political pamphlets on Bulgarian national rights in Dobrudja.[160] He was joined by Dragomir Panev, Ivan Penakov, and the Varna lawyer Alexandăr Dyakovich, on behalf of the Dobrudja Organization. The mission enlisted Bulgarian academics who were leaders in their respective fields, such as Mihail Arnaudov on folklore; Stoyan Romanski on ethnography and history; Stiliyan Chilingirov (deputy director of the National Library in Sofia) on cultural and educational work; archaeologist Karel Škorpil for archaeological works; and Dimităr T. Strashimirov and Petăr Gabe on general history and political issues. In parallel, Bogdan Filov, director of the Bulgarian National Museum of Archeology, was sent on a related mission in Bucharest.[161]

158 On the history of this organization, see "Dobroudjanska organizatia" in *Almanah na balgarskite natsionalni dvizheniya sled 1878 g.*, eds. Georgi Markov, Alexander Grebenarov, Voodya Milachkov, and Lachezar Stoyanov (Sofia: Marin Drinov Academic Publishing House, 2005), 142–143.

159 These were authored by ethnographers Stefan Kostov, Anton P. Stoilov, and Lyubomir Popov. See Petăr Petrov, *Predgovor*, v.

160 Milan G. Markov, *Bulgaria's Historical Rights to Dobrudja* (Bern: P. Haupt, 1918); and *Le sort politique de la Dobroudja après le Congrès de Berlin, 1878–1916*, 2nd ed. (Sofia: Imprimerie de la cour royale, 1918). On his biography, see *Almanah na bylgarskite nacionalni dvizhenia sled 1878–g*, 319.

161 Petăr Petrov, *Predgovor*, 6.

This team of social scientists produced a number of studies,[162] first published in Bulgarian, in a new book series devoted to the study of Dobrudja.[163]

In autumn 1917, in anticipation of Romania's imminent defeat and the signing of a separate peace, the Bulgarian government also initiated an unprecedented campaign of public diplomacy abroad in support of the national cause, through memoranda and other historical publications fostering the Bulgarian cause, focusing primarily on Dobrudja.[164] "It seems," noted a report of the French Ministry of War on the Bulgarian press, "that journalists have been given the green light to conduct intense propaganda on this topic, in order to give the government the opportunity to claim, before its allies as well as its enemies, that public opinion is unanimous in demanding the union of Dobrudja with Bulgaria."[165]

This campaign primarily targeted Bulgaria's allies Germany and Austria-Hungary. Bulgarian politicians and the press lamented that Bulgaria's allies had insufficient knowledge of Bulgarian war aims and their historical legitimacy. Thus a top official of the Ministry of Agriculture returning from Germany com-

162 The Bulgarian studies on Dobrudja produced during or shortly after the war, both published and unpublished, were recently compiled in the volume *Nauchna ekspeditsiya v Dobrudzha, 1917 g. Dokladi na universitetski i drugi ucheni* [Scientific Expedition in Dobrudja, 1917. Reports of the University and Other Scientists], ed. Petăr Petrov (Sofia: Universitetsko izdatelstvo "Sv. Kliment Ohridski," 1994).

163 See the following publications in the series "Biblioteka 'Dobrudzha'": no. 1: Milan G. Markov, *Istoricheskite prava na Bŭlgariya vărhu Dobrudzha* (Sofia: Izdanie na Narodospomagatelniya fond "Dobrudzha," 1917); no. 2: Stiliyan Chilingirov, *Dobrudzha i nasheto văzrazhdane: Kulturno-istoricheski izdirvaniya* (Sofia: Izd. na Narodospomagatelniya fond "Dobrudzha," 1917); no. 3: Ivan Penakov, *Kyustendzhanskoto pristanishte* (Sofia: Izdanie na Narodospomagatelniya fond "Dobrudzha," 1918); no. 4: *Memoar do predstavitelite na dărzhavite, prizvani da vădvoryat mir mezhdu narodite* (Sofia: Izdanie na Narodospomagatelniya fond "Dobrudzha," 1918); no. 5: Danail V. Katsev and Dragomir Pachov, *Rumănskite zhestokosti nad otvlechenoto dobrudzhansko naselenie v Moldova: po ofitsialni rumănski dokumenti i lichni izpovedi na zavărnali se ot Moldova dobrudzhantsi* (Sofia: Izdanie na Narodospomagatelniya fond "Dobrudzha," 1918); no. 6: Ivan Enchev-Vidyu, *Stari i novi pametnitsi v Dobrudzha. Hudozhestveno-etnografichen Etyud | Alte und neue Denkmäler in der Dobrudscha / Monuments Anciens et Nouveaux en Dobroudja* (Sofia: Izd. na Narodospomagatelniya fond "Dobrudzha," 1918); no. 7: Stiliyan Chilingirov, *Stefan Karadzha: Zhivotopisni belezhki* (Sofia: Izd. na Narodospomagatelniya fond "Dobrudzha," 1918).

164 See France, Ministère de la guerre, Bureau de la presse étrangère, *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 11 Novembre au 7 Décembre 1917* (Paris, January 11, 1918), 4. The often sarcastic and ironic tone of this report sheds light on the French perception of the Bulgarian propaganda campaign as well.

165 Ibid.

plained about the indifference of the Berlin press with regard to Bulgaria's war aims: "The fact that this press pays very little attention to the Bulgarians and their claims causes us great pain. *Because in this period critical public opinion is an important factor for the solution of national problems*. The Bulgarian claims must be accompanied by historical and scientific arguments, and they should be brought to the knowledge of the German public."[166] In a similar manner, the deputy Georgiev noted after a visit to Germany that, while Bulgaria's rights to Macedonia and the Morava were acknowledged, the German public was not well informed about Dobrudja: "Although German public opinion wants the creation of a strong Bulgaria, she does not want to violate the principle of nationalities that she intends to defend at the future peace congress. The history of Dobrudja and the ties that link it to Bulgaria are not known; it would be good to clarify this issue, and demonstrate the rightness of our cause to our allies and the whole world."[167] To remedy this situation, an article in *Dnevnik* on November 26, 1917, demanded the Bulgarian intelligentsia to fully mobilize to support Bulgaria's claims in Dobrudja: "Journalists, writers, teachers, actors, members of Parliament, etc., must go to Germany, Austria, and Hungary to convince the peoples and governments of those countries that Dobrudja is Bulgarian. To cover the costs of this propaganda, the *nouveaux riches* must be made to contribute. All the existing literature on the issue must be translated into German and French. The journal *Dobroudja* must appear in Bulgarian and German, etc."[168]

To the same end, governmental and non-governmental organizations initiated numerous public events meant to secure foreign support for Bulgaria's war aims. On November 13, 1917, the Committee of Dobrudja hosted a banquet for a large delegation of German and Austro-Hungarian journalists who were invited to Bulgaria to visit the country and its front zones. "All speeches pointed out that all of Dobrudja was and should become again an integral part of Bulgaria," *L'Echo de Bulgarie*, the official newspaper of the Bulgarian royal court, reported the next day.[169] The journalists from the allied countries were urged to defend the Bulgarian cause more zealously; it was impressed on them how important this task was for the Bulgarian nation. The

166 *Kambana*, December 17, 1917, cited in France, Ministère de la guerre, Bureau de la presse étrangère, *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 8 Décembre 1917 au 5 janvier 1918*, no. 13 (Paris, February 9, 1918), 3, my emphasis.

167 *Kambana*, December 20, 1917, cited in *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 8 Décembre 1917 au 5 janvier 1918*, 3.

168 *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 11 Novembre au 7 Décembre 1917*, 4.

169 Ibid.

politician and journalist Boris Minchov Vazov wrote in the opposition journal *Mir*: "We live with the conviction, with the belief that you will help us with all your force to achieve our unification, which cannot be complete without the incorporation of Dobrudja up to the Danube. We are so convinced of this necessity that any thought that runs contrary [to this ideal] tortures us."[170]

Most importantly, numerous propaganda works were published abroad, mostly in Berlin and Vienna, the capitals of Bulgaria's allies. Thus in anticipation of the peace talks, Dimităr Rizov, Bulgaria's plenipotentiary minister in Berlin (1915–1918),[171] published a historical atlas called *Bulgarians in Their Historical, Ethnographic, and Political Frontiers*, asserting Bulgaria's claims at the new international peace conference. The aim of the work was to "bring proof of her inalienable rights to the provinces which she considers Bulgarian and, in this manner, gain the moral sanction of the whole world for her unification."[172] In the introduction to the atlas, Rizov called for a durable peace in the Balkans based on the principle of nationalities. He claimed for Bulgaria the provinces of Macedonia, Dobrudja, and Nish, arguing that "Bulgaria has national, moral, historical, and geographical rights to them."[173] To achieve peace and stability in the region, Rizov argued, Romania needed to relinquish the entire province of Dobrudja, "the cradle of the Bulgarian people," and withdraw, geographically, from the Balkan peninsula.[174]

Similar publications were also translated in English and French and targeted public opinion and decision-makers in neutral or enemy countries. An important location of Bulgarian propaganda activities was Bern, the capital of Switzerland, a neutral country strategically located in the middle of the continent. It was hoped that, via Switzerland, this propaganda material could easily reach a large French-speaking audience.[175] The campaign peaked in the

170 Ibid.

171 *Die Bulgaren in ihren historischen, ethnographischen und politischen Grenzen* (*Atlas mit 40 Landkarten*), Vorwort von D. Rizoff / *Les Bulgares dans leurs frontières historiques, ethnographiques et politiques* (*Atlas contenant 40 cartes*), with an introduction by D. Rizoff (Berlin: Königlichen Bulgarischen Gesandten in Berlin, Königliche Hoflithographie, Hof-Buch- und -Steindruckerei Wilhelm Greve, 1917), promacedonia.org (accessed December 17, 2014). The atlas contained forty maps and captions in German, English, French, and Bulgarian compiled by Anastas Ishirkoff, professor of geography at Sofia University, and Vasil Zlatarski, professor of history at Sofia University.

172 Ibid., xvi.

173 Ibid., xi.

174 Ibid.

175 For works published in Bern, see Milan G. Markov, *Bulgaria's Historical Rights to Dobrudja* (Bern: P. Haupt, 1918); and Anastas Ishirkov, *Les Bulgares en Dobroudja: apercu historique*

first months of 1918, during the tense peace negotiations with Romania. These efforts were closely monitored by the French Ministry of War; a report on the Bulgarian press noted that "Bulgarian propaganda is intense. Chauvinism and annexationism are literally running rampant."[176]

In parallel with this campaign, Bulgarian authorities mobilized the Bulgarians in Dobrudja to demand self-determination.[177] The main instrument of this campaign was the leading publication of the Dobrudja Organization, entitled *Vestnik Dobrudzha* (Dobrudja Newspaper), published in Babadag (1917–1919) and devoted exclusively to the province's status in the changing geopolitical context generated by he war. The first issue of *Vestnik Dobrudzha*, published on June 27, 1917, launched "An Appeal to All Nations," which presented the province as "a victim of an international injustice."[178] The manifesto virulently condemned Romania's rule of Dobrudja as a "terrorist colonial regime." It also accused Romania of resorting "to false statistics, falsified history, and different forms of deception in order to prove its supposed historical right over Dobrudja."[179]

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et ethnographique (Bern: Impr. Pochon-Jent & Buhler, 1919). For a Romanian response to these works that was also published in Switzerland, see Petrescu-Comnen, *La Dobrogea* (1918) (see pp. 202–203 for a list of Bulgarian propaganda works on Dobrudja).

176 *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 8 Décembre 1917 au 5 janvier 1918*, 3.

177 For Dobrudja's status during World War I in Bulgarian historiography, see, among others: Nikolay Yanakiev, "Dobrudzhantsi i osvobozhdenieto na Dobrudzha prez Părvata svetovna voyna (1914–1916 g.)" *Dobrudzha: Sbornik* 9 (1992): 99–112; Antonina Kuzmanova, "Dobrudzhanskiyat văpros (1878–1944 g.)" *Voennoistoricheski Sbornik* 62, no. 1 (1993): 21–40; Veliko Lechev, "Bălgariya i neynite săyuznitsi na Dunavskata konferentsiya v Bukuresht (ianuari-avgust 1917 g.)" *Izvestiya na Dărzhavnite Arhivi* no. 93 (2007): 3–31; Stefan Minkov, "Der Status der Nord-Dobrudscha im Kontext des deutsch-bulgarischen Verhältnisses im Ersten Weltkrieg," in *Der Erste Weltkrieg auf dem Balkan: Perspektiven der Forschung*, eds. Jürgen Angelow, Stein Gahlen, and Oliver Gundula (Berlin, 2011), 241–255; Stefan Minkov, *Dobrudzhanskiyat văpros prez Părvata svetovna voyna: geopoliticheski, politicheski i voennostrategicheski obzor* (Shumen, 2013); Stefan Minkov, "Intsidentăt ot 9 fevruari 1918 g. v Kyustendzha. Belezhki vărhu bălgaro-germanskite otnosheniya v Severna Dobrudzha prez Părvata svetovna voyna," *Istorikii* 6 (2013): 191–203; Stefan Minkov, "Statutăt na Severna Dobrudzha i bălgaro-germanskite otnosheniya v godinite na Părvata svetovna voyna," *Zhurnal za istoricheski i arheologicheski izsledvaniya*, no. 2 (2013): 118–134; Sasho Popov, "General Stefan Toshev—osvoboditelyat na Dobrudzha," *Dobrudzha: Sbornik* 13 (1999): 41–55; and Stefan Popov, "Deystviyata na Treta otdelna Armiya v Dobrudzha prez 1916 godina," *Voennoistoricheski Sbornik* 65, no. 3 (1996): 148–164.

178 "Apel kăm Vsichki Narodi" (An Appeal to All Nations), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 1, no. 1 (June 27, 1917): 1.

179 Ibid.

The final aim of this campaign was the annexation of Dobrudja to Bulgaria.[180] The Bulgarian press claimed that each day, the National Assembly (*Săbranie*) received letters sent by various personalities from Dobrudja asking for the "union" of the province "to the mother country,"[181] "to induce the idea that it is Dobrudja itself that wants to unite with Bulgaria," as a French report noted.[182] Ultimately, a "congress of nationalities" organized and sponsored by the "Dobrudja Organization in Bulgaria," held in Babadag on December 16–17, 1917, proclaimed the union of Dobrudja with Bulgaria.[183] Reportedly, the congress brought together about 400 people, not only Bulgarians but also Turks, Tartars, Russians, and Germans. Its works were amply covered in the Bulgarian press, and its resolution was welcomed by King Ferdinand and Prime Minister Radoslavoff.[184] On January 7, 1918, the *Memoir* published by the Central National Council of Dobrudja, a new organ created at the congress to represent the interests of ethnic Bulgarians in the province, condemned the attempts "to define the future political ownership of Dobroudja without any regard to the desires, aspirations, rights and interests of its population."[185] The *Memoir* warned foreign public opinion that "Roumania, having lost this province in the field of battle, is attempting to win it back in the diplomatic field."[186] Through "false statistics" and a "perversion of historical facts," Romanians tried "to mislead the unbiased European public opinion to the effect that the Roumanians have indisputable historic, ethnographic and economic rights over Dobroudja."[187]

Capitalizing on this campaign, Bulgaria pressed its allies to immediately resolve the Dobrudjan question in the Bulgarians' favor. However, it soon became apparent that Bulgaria's goals were not only opposed by Romania but also largely resisted by Bulgaria's more powerful allies, Germany and

180 This aim was spelled out in many articles: see, for example, Georgi Venelin, "Văprosăt za aneksijata na Dobrudzha i nejnata svoboda" (The Question of the Annexation of Dobrudja and its Freedom), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 18, no. 1 (August 6, 1917): 1.

181 *Mir*, November 30, 1918, cited in *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 11 Novembre au 7 Décembre 1917*, 4.

182 *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 11 Novembre au 7 Décembre 1917*, 4.

183 See Conseil national central de la Dobroudja, *Mémoire des représentants de la Dobroudja* (Babadagh, January 1918). See also Dobroudja Organization in Bulgaria, *Memoir from Central National Council of Dobroudja to the representatives of the states called together to restore the peace among the nations* (Sofia: Royal Printing Office, 1919).

184 *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 8 Décembre 1917 au 5 janvier 1918*, 4.

185 *Memoir*, 3.

186 Ibid.

187 Ibid.

Austria-Hungary, who harbored other plans for the postwar administration of Dobrudja. Wondering anxiously, "Will Dobrudja remain Bulgarian?" an editorial in *Vestnik Dobrudzha* warned, "We have to fight and we will fight with facts in our hands and by force of arms."[188] In their turn, the representatives of the Bulgarians in Dobrudja warned that they were considering military resistance to any "foreign occupation" of the province, including by the allies.[189] Their discourse also turned anti-establishment concerning the extent to which the Sofia-based Bulgarian politicians would agree to a partition of the province among the Central Powers.

Romania

The Romanian side monitored closely the Bulgarian public diplomacy campaign and reacted to it with its own propaganda strategy. In March 1916, a few months ahead of Romania's entry into the Great War, historians Constantin Moisil and Constantin Brătescu established, in Bucharest, a thrice-yearly magazine called *Arhiva Dobrogei* (Dobrudja Archive), published by the Society for Research and Study on Dobrudja.[190] The aim of this new society and its magazine, grouping leading academics specializing in the history of Dobrudja, was to promote the interdisciplinary study of the province, mainly in the disciplines of history, ethnography, geography, economy, geology, and biology. The study of Dobrudja was regarded as "a task of national importance and priority" that was intended "on the one hand to enlighten public opinion and leading circles as to the vital importance this region has for us and, on the other hand, to provide our statesmen with powerful weapons in support of the rights we have over this province."[191]

Arhiva Dobrogei was short-lived, however. Its publication was disrupted by the occupation of Dobrudja and then of Bucharest by the Central Powers, and it was resumed only after the end of the war. During the war, in the territories still under Romanian jurisdiction, political leaders from Dobrudja or dedicated to the Romanian cause in the province, many of whom had worked on *Arhiva*, such as Ioan N. Roman, Oreste Trafali, Constantin Brătescu, Nicolae Sadoveanu, Alexandru Lapedatu, and George Vâlsan, campaigned against the occupation of

188 "Shte ostane li Dobrudzha bălgarska?" (Will Dobrudja Remain Bulgarian?), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 1, no. 32 (September 7, 1917): 1.

189 Marghilom, *Note Politice*, 377.

190 *Arhiva Dobrogei. Revista Societății pentru cercetarea și studierea Dobrogei. Publicată sub auspiciile casei școalelor, și sub ingrijirea d-lui Const. Moisil*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Tipografia Jockey Club, 1916).

191 Constantin Moisil, in *Arhiva Dobrogei*, vol. 1 (1916), 6.

Dobrudja. Grouped in Iaşi around the newspaper *Neamul Românesc*, led by the historian Nicolae Iorga, they lobbied for the preservation of Romania's rights to Dobrudja.[192] Although, as shown above, Iorga supported military action against Austria-Hungary in Transylvania over its expansion in the Balkans, during World War I he emerged as a major catalyst of the campaign of military resistance in Dobrudja.[193] Iorga's focus on the "Bulgarian danger" is illustrated by the fact that the first volume in his series *Neamul Românesc* was pointedly titled *Un stat de pradă: Bulgaria* (A Predatory State: Bulgaria).[194] In this pamphlet, published on September 4, 1916, in the shadow of the Battle of Turtucaia, Iorga

192 See George Vâlsan, "Drepturi bulgare şi române în Dobrogea," *Neamul Românesc*, no. 137 (May 19, 1918); G. Vâlsan, "Drepturi române şi Bulgare în Dobrogea," *Neamul Românesc*, nos. 172–175 (June 24–27, 1918); G. Vâlsan, "Valoarea Dobrogei pentru Bulgaria şi pentru România," *Neamul Românesc*, no. 110 (April 21, 1918); Ioan N. Roman, "Dr. Rozov despre Dobrogea şi plebiscit," *Neamul Românesc*, nos. 141–143 (May 24–26, 1918); "Ceva despre vechimea bulgarilor dobrogeni," *Neamul Românesc*, nos. 163–165 (June 1918); A. Petrescu-Malcoci, "Contribuţii la chestia Dobrogei," *Neamul Românesc*, no. 87 (March 29, 1918); Alexandru Lapedatu, *Neamul Românesc* 12, nos. 179, 181, 185 (1917); C. Brătescu, "O nouă contribuţie la chestiunea Dobrogei," *Neamul Românesc*, no. 52 (February 25, 1918); C. Brătescu, "Noi contribuţii la chestiunea Dobrogei," *Neamul Românesc*, no. 61 (March 3, 1918). For his debate with Liubomir Miletic, see Nicolae Iorga, "Încă un bulgar care ne disprețuiește—d. Profesor şi doctor Liubomir Miletic," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 192 (July 14, 1918): 1; C. Brătescu: "Răspuns d-lui Işirkov—I," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 233 (August 24, 1918): 2; "Răspuns d-lui Işirkov—II," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 235 (August 26, 1918): 2; "Răspuns d-lui Işirkov—III," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 238 (August 29, 1918): 2; "Răspuns d-lui Işirkov—VI," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 240 (August 31, 1918): 2. All these articles were republished in *La Dobrudja roumaine: études et documents*, ed. Ioan N. Roman, trans. Mele A. Demetrescu (Bucharest: L'Institute pour l'étude de L'Europe sud-orientale, 1919).

193 On the place of Dobrudja in Iorga's work, see Gelu Culicea, *Dobrudja în lucrările lui Nicolae Iorga: bibliografie adnotată şi comentată* (Constanţa: Biblioteca Judeteană Constanţa, 1998). For Nicolae Iorga's partisan works on Dobrudja, see mainly *Acţiunea militară a României în Bulgaria cu ostaşii noştri* (Vălenii-de-Munte: Neamul Românesc, 1913); *Sârbi, Bulgari şi Români în Peninsula Balcanică în Evul Mediu* (Bucharest, 1915); Nicolae Iorga, "Cum îşi crează Bulgarii drepturi în Dobrogea," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 191 (July 13, 1918): 1; Nicolae Iorga, *Droits nationaux et politiques des Roumans dans la Dobrudja: considerations historiques* (Jassy: Impr. de l'Etat, 1917). See also "Ruşii în Dobrogea," August 25, 1916; "Germania, între Unguri şi Bulgari," September 18, 1916; "Dobrogea," October 11, 1916; and "Răspuns la mesagiu, rostit în şedinţa Camerei de Miercuri 14 decembrie 1916," December 19, 1916, republished in Nicolae Iorga, *Războiul nostru în note zilnice, 1916–1917*, vol. 2 (Craiova: Ramuri, n.d.), 94, 150–152, 202–205, 205–213, respectively.

194 Nicolae Iorga, *Un stat de pradă: Bulgaria* (Iaşi: Neamul Românesc, 1917) (Biblioteca Neamul Românesc No. 1), September 4, 1916, republished in Nicolae Iorga, *Războiul nostru în note zilnice, 1916–1917*, vol. 2, 115–135.

even denies the Bulgarian state a national character, portraying it instead as a collection of former Ottoman imperial lands. To be sure, Iorga acknowledged that "The Bulgarians are a nation who fight on the basis of a national program to satisfy certain national rights."[195] However, he explicitly stated that "no matter how much it speaks of nationalism, Bulgaria is not a nation-state and, above all, does not tend to enlarge itself based on the principle of the national right."[196] Thus the Bulgaria produced by the Treaty of Berlin was Bulgarian only in rural areas; the population of the Danubian region was Turkish-Romanian, while the seashore was Greek and Gagauz.[197] The situation was the same in Oriental Rumelia, populated by the Pomaks and by the Greeks, "who possessed the seashore and all the urban centers in the interior, especially Fillipopol."[198] In Iorga's view, through its union with Rumelia, Bulgaria came to rule over "a great number of citizens of a different race." He concluded that the Bulgaria of the San Stefano and Berlin treaties "was not a purely national state but a heterogeneous political creation" of the Great Powers. Iorga pointed out that "For the economic and political existence of our country, Dobrudja is a necessity, an elementary but absolute necessity"[199] He demanded a military border in the south as a defense against what he called Romania's lying and perfidious neighbors.[200] He also emphasized Romania's European mandate for the annexation of Dobrudja: "We defend a province given to us by Europe—that Europe which also comprised Germany and its Austrian satellite." At a time when Bulgarian troops were occupying Dobrudja, Iorga firmly condemned the Bulgarian national project, accusing Bulgaria of conducting "a crazy policy" intended to create a modern nation-state based on historical claims to the crown of the Eastern Roman Empire of the medieval Bulgarian principalities. This "aggressive" policy impeded Bulgaria's neighbors from fulfilling their national ideals.

Throughout the war, Iorga continued to publish numerous articles on the issue. To counter Bulgaria's propaganda abroad and to reaffirm Romania's historical rights to Dobrudja, in 1917 Iorga authored a comprehensive brochure called *Droits nationaux et politiques des Roumans dans la Dobrudja: considérations historiques*, published first in French and later also in Romanian.[201] His

195 Iorga, *Un stat de pradă*, 2.

196 Ibid., 4.

197 Iorga, *Războiul nostru în note zilnice*, 116.

198 Ibid.

199 Iorga, "Dobrogea, 11 October 1916," *Războiul nostru în note zilnice, 1916–1917*, vol. 2, 203.

200 Ibid., 205.

201 Nicolae Iorga, *Droits nationaux et politiques des Roumans dans la Dobrudja: considérations historiques* (Jassy: Impr. de l'Etat, 1917). Romanian edition: *Drepturi naționale și politice în Dobrogea*, trans. C. Brătescu (Editura Fundației Culturale Regele Mihai I, n.d.).

collaborators continued to closely monitor Bulgaria's propaganda publications on Dobrudja and published many critical responses. For instance, C. Brătescu reacted to two works on Dobrudja published abroad by the Bulgarian geographer Anastas Todorov Ishirkov: "In Dobrudja, he says, the Bulgarians have geographical, historical, ethnographic, political, economic, and cultural rights! An ironic observer could also add: astronomical, biological, pathological, etc., etc."[202] Arguing that Ishirkov's works were "poor in data but rich in counterfeits and false assertions, intentionally or not," Brătescu set out to correct the Bulgarian geographer in a series of five articles in *Neamul Românesc* (August 25–September 2, 1918).[203]

Articles on Dobrudja also appeared in other Iaşi-based newspapers, such as *România, Acțiunea Română, Evenimentul*, and *L'Independance Roumaine*, and in newspapers published in Bessarabia after it was freed from the Tsarist occupation.[204] Published in Romanian (with a few of them also translated into French), these articles were meant to increase the awareness of the army and public opinion to the fate of Dobrudja and to mobilize energies to defend the province.[205]

In addition to the initiatives of these scholars and public figures, many of whom were from Dobrudja, the Romanian government made concerted efforts to counter Bulgaria's diplomatic propaganda for the annexation of all of Dobrudja. Thus, as a direct response to the historical atlas published by Rizov, the Bulgarian minister in Berlin, Prime Minister Alexandru Marghiloman published a counter-memorandum with the help of the historian Dimitrie Onciul and the geographer Simion Mehedinti, then minister of religion and public instruction.[206] According to Marghiloman's later account,

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202 C. Brătescu, "Răspuns d-lui Işirkov—I," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 233 (August 24, 1918): 2.

203 Ibid.; "Răspuns d-lui Işirkov—II," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 235 (August 26, 1918): 2; "Răspuns d-lui Işirkov—III," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 238 (August 29, 1918): 2; "Răspuns d-lui Işirkov—VI," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 240 (August 31, 1918): 2.

204 Constantin Moisil, "Lupta pentru apărarea drepturilor românești asupra Dobrogei," *Arhiva Dobrobei*, 166.

205 Reportedly, during the peace negotiations with the Central Powers, the Dobrudjan group also prepared a memorandum, written by Ioan N. Roman, that summarized all the arguments in favor of Romania's rights to Dobrudja, submitted to the diplomatic representatives of Germany and Austria-Hungary. See Moisil, "Lupta pentru apărarea drepturilor românești asupra Dobrogei," *Arhiva Dobrobei*, 166. However, in his memoirs, Prime Minister Marghiloman does not mention this memorandum.

206 Marghiloman, *Note Politice*, 294, 372. These works were later published as Dimitrie Onciul, "Date istorice asupra Dobrogei," *Revista istorică* 5 (1919): 48–53, and Simion Mehedinți, "Observațiuni asupra Dobrogei," *Convorbiri Literare* 51 (1919): 74 ff.

the Romanian team worked hard to complete the memorandum prior to signing the peace treaty.[207] Although they did not expect this publication to reverse the Great Powers' geopolitical plans in Dobrudja, they wanted nevertheless to counter the intense Bulgarian propaganda with "proper information and documentation."[208]

The Separate Peace: Northern Dobrudja, a Condominium of the Central Powers

Despite assiduous propaganda from both Romania and Bulgaria asserting their national rights to the province, it soon became evident that Germany and Austria-Hungary wanted to keep the province for themselves, mostly because of the strategic geopolitical value of the Lower Danube and the Constanţa harbor.[209] To alleviate Romania's objections to the loss of Dobrudja, and in view of the infamous 1878 forced territorial exchange between Dobrudja and Southern Bessarabia, Germany suggested that Romania annex the neighboring province of Bessarabia (in the context of the disintegration of the Russian Empire) as a possible territorial compensation. Bulgaria enthusiastically supported the proposal in the hope that this would facilitate its own annexation of Dobrudja. On February 13, 1918, Dimităr Rizov, the Bulgarian minister to Germany, stated in an interview in the *Locak-Anziger* (Berlin) that:

> If Rumania takes Bessarabia and leaves the Dobrudja to Bulgaria, we shall be pleased. Our Government would accept the deal. This solution historically would be justified, and the Central Powers would raise no objection to it, as it would contribute to the restoration of tranquility in the Balkans.[210]

Predictably, this suggestion was rejected by Romanian politicians, which resulted in a striking paradox. In 1878, Romanian politicians had refused to

207 Marghilom, *Note Politice*, 387.

208 Ibid., 384, 385.

209 Ibid., 374.

210 "Bulgarian Idea of Peace with Rumania: Minister Says Teutons will Gladly Let Her Exchange Dobruja for Russian Bessarabia," *New York Times* (February 14, 1918), http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9505E5D6103FE433A25757C1A9649C946996D6CF. See also *Le Bruxellois* 8, no. 1212 (February 14, 1918): 1, http://warpress.cegesoma.be/nl/node/53004/download/DqRfkVSSnfqR7giRwB3j.

trade Southern Bessarabia for Dobrudja, yet in 1918—forty years later—they refused to trade Dobrudja for Bessarabia (mainly on the grounds that they possessed Bessarabia rightfully and that the Central Powers had no right to trade it). One tactic the Romanian politicians adopted to discredit the idea of a territorial exchange was to paint the political situation in Bessarabia in grim terms. This was done to refute Germany's strategy of presenting Romania's annexation of the province as a fair compensation for the prospective loss of Dobrudja.[211]

In the end, Germany and Austria-Hungary imposed their own interests in the region, at the expense of both Bulgaria and Romania, their current and former allies in the region, respectively. The Treaty of Bucharest, signed on May 7, 1918, continued the Great Powers' exercise of collective imperialism over the Lower Danube but limited its benefits to Germany and Austria-Hungary, excluding France and Great Britain and subordinating the geopolitical interests of the states in the region.[212] Germany, in particular, assumed an active political role in Dobrudja and articulated its own, distinct geopolitical discourse on the region.[213]

On Romania, the peace conditions were very harsh, involving painful territorial losses and total economic subordination to the Central Powers' war effort, but allowing the preservation of the monarchy and the occupation of Bessarabia.[214] First, Romania was forced not only to cede Southern Dobrudja (which had just been annexed in 1913) to Bulgaria but also to allow an adjustment of the province's border in favor of the latter. Romania also ceded Northern Dobrudja (up to the thalweg of St. George's Arm in the Danube Delta) to a condominium of the Central Powers. The inhabitants of these regions could choose between retaining their former citizenship and acquiring the new one (Article 12). To alleviate the economic impact of these territorial losses, the Central Powers allowed Romania to use a commercial corridor to

211 Marghilom, *Note Politice*, 381.

212 The treaty was ratified by the German Bundesrat on June 4, 1918, by the Reichstag on July 3, 1918, by the Romanian Chamber on June 28, 1918, and by the Romanian Senate on July 4, 1918. See United States, Department of State, Texts of the Roumanian "Peace" (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1918), 5–28, https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/routreat.html. For the text of the treaty in English, see United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918*, Supplement 1: *The World War*, vol. 1 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1918), 771–778. It should be mentioned that King Ferdinand I of Romania refused to countersign the treaty, thus leaving the door open for its repeal.

213 On the German campaign, administration, and academic discourse on Dobrudja, see *Bilder Aus Der Dobrudscha: 1916–1918*.

214 Marghilom, *Note Politice*, 366.

the Black Sea via Cernavodă and Constanța. Finally, Romania's frontier on the Carpathians was also adjusted in Austria-Hungary's favor, giving the latter a strategic advantage in the event of a renewed military conflict. In exchange, the territories of the Old Kingdom that were nominally under the occupation of the Central Powers were returned to Romania (Article 17).

To secure their grip on the Lower Danube, the Central Powers imposed a new legal regime on the Danube. The European Danube Commission, with its powers, privileges, and obligations, was made permanent under the new name of "Commission on the Mouth of the Danube." The Commission's competence was extended to all branches and mouths of the Danube and to the parts contiguous to the Black Sea. The Commission was to consist only of delegates from the riparian states situated on the Danube or on the European shore of the Black Sea, with the inclusion of the Ottoman Empire but the perpetual exclusion of Russia but also of the other, non-riparian, Great Powers (France and Great Britain).

Finally, a secret economic protocol to the treaty placed the Romanian economy under a system of heavy exploitation by the Central Powers. Its oil production was ceded to Germany for ninety-nine years. Furthermore, the army of occupation continued to be allowed to requisition food or raw materials on Romanian territory (art. 20). Romania also had to abrogate all navigation and harbor taxes and to guarantee to the ships of the other contracting parties free circulation on the Romanian part of the Danube, including the harbors connected to it.

The Treaty of Bucharest was bitterly contested by both Romania and Bulgaria, who continued their public diplomacy campaign for a more favorable resolution at a future peace congress. In Bulgaria especially, the provisions of the treaty caused national outrage; the Bulgarians felt the Central Powers had treated them as a foe rather than an ally. In response to the Treaty of Bucharest, on May 9 three representatives of the Dobrudja Organization protested to the German secretary of state for foreign affairs, Richard von Kühlmann, against the partition of Dobrudja, asking that all of it be annexed to Bulgaria. In his response, von Kühlmann stated that, while the Treaty of Bucharest only partly fulfilled Bulgarian aspirations, there was reason to believe that those aspirations would soon be fully satisfied.[215] These formal reassurances could not appease Bulgarian resentment.

On June 4, 1918, the Central National Council of Dobrudja issued a new declaration expressing its "profound regret" over the new partition of Dobrudja and deploring the unfulfilled promises of the Bulgarian state and its allies.

215 "La Paix Roumaine," *L'echo D'Alger* 7, no. 2238 (May 10, 1918): 1.

The Council accused Germany and Austria-Hungary of betraying their own principles regarding the sacred rights of nations.[216] Reiterating "its immovable faith in the might of national rights," it committed itself to struggling for the Bulgarians' right to self-determination.[217] This campaign had a strong impact on Bulgarian public opinion: on June 20, 1918, Prime Minister Radoslavov was forced to resign due to his failure to annex all of Dobrudja.

Encouraged by this success, which was to signal Bulgaria's adoption of a more determined pro-Dobrudja foreign policy, the Dobrudja Organization continued its campaign for "self-determination." To this end, it issued numerous partisan publications not only in Bulgarian but also in English and French, such as *The Political Destiny of Dobroudja* and the newspaper *Le Mouvement Dobroudjain*, militating for the inclusion of Dobrudja into Bulgaria according to the "national principle," which was "the main factor of state formation" in the recent history of Europe.[218] In a culmination of this campaign, on September 23, 1918, the Bulgarian population of Dobrudja held a second general assembly in the city of Babadag and adopted a final resolution demanding Dobrudja's annexation to Bulgaria.[219] The assembly elected an Executive Committee of thirty-three members and entrusted the Central National Council of Dobrudja to prepare a memorandum to be submitted to "neutral and belligerent states."[220] These efforts seemed to bear fruit: on September 24, 1918, a protocol regarding the transfer of the jointly administered zone in Northern Dobrudja to Bulgaria was signed in Berlin by Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria. In compensation for this territorial acquisition, Bulgaria was to cede the left bank of the Maritsa River to Turkey.[221] This agreement—actually a desperate attempt by the Central Powers to keep Bulgaria within their coalition—could not be implemented, however, as Bulgaria capitulated to Allied forces on September 29, 1918. The victory of the Entente and the end of military

216 *Memoir*, 11.

217 Ibid., 57.

218 "Pravoto na samoopredeljane na narodite" (The Right of Self-Determination), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 2, no. 180 (September 4, 1918): 1.

219 See *Protocoles de la prémière Assemblée régionale nationale dobroudjaine à Babadag du 22 au 23 septembre 1918* (Second Congrès national de la Dobroudja). Avec 5 annexes (Sofia, Impimerie [sic] "Balkan," 1918); and *Dobrudzha*, "Vtori Dobrudzhanski Naroden săbor" (The Second Dobrudja People's Council), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 2, no. 188 (September 23, 1918): 1.

220 *Memoir*, 4. See also Ant. Borlakov, "Dumata na Dobrudzhanskija săbor" (The Word of Dobrudja's Council), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 2, no. 188 (September 23, 1918): 2.

221 Richard Crampton, *Bulgaria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 216.

operations opened the door to yet another diplomatic confrontation between Romania and Bulgaria over Dobrudja, at the Paris Peace Conference.

Experts, Public Diplomacy, and National Rights: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919

The Paris Peace Conference was a forum of open display and confrontation of national claims over various territories.[222] In theory, the concept of historical rights was rejected at the peace conference in favor of the principle of self-determination based on demographic realities "in the field." However, in practice, politicians used a combination of various types of rights to back their national claims over certain regions. To maximize their impact on the decision-makers, these claims were often summarized in propaganda monographs, combining historical, ethnographic, religious, and diplomatic arguments. These public diplomacy campaigns transformed the Paris Conference into a global arena of confrontation of nationalist claims and counter-claims, backed by various forms of expert knowledge.

This propaganda warfare actually started during the war, as the belligerents devised comprehensive strategies to gain support from public opinion at home and abroad for a favorable peace settlement. A wide range of local and foreign experts was mobilized to this end, in unprecedented campaigns of public diplomacy also meant to provide information that would help statesmen arrive at a solid and durable peace settlement. The largest and most influential research groups were established in the United Kingdom, France, and the United States.[223] In Great Britain, George Walter Prothero was employed by the Foreign Office during the war as an advisor to provide historical expertise and to coordinate propaganda efforts for a peace settlement based on the

222 On the making of the Paris Peace Treaties, see, among others: F.S. Marston, *The Peace Conference of 1919: Organization and Procedure* (Oxford, 1944); Alan Sharp, *Consequences of Peace: The Versailles Settlement; Aftermath and Legacy 1919–1920* (London: Haus Publishing Ltd., 2010); Margaret MacMillan, *Peacemakers: The Paris Conference of 1919 and Its Attempt to End War* (London: J. Murray, 2001). On mass propaganda approaches to war and peace, see Peter Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words: Literature as Propaganda; 1914–18 and After* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1989).

223 On the French approach and peace plans, see David Stevenson, "French War Aims and Peace Planning," in *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment after 75 Years*, eds. Manfred F. Boemeke, Gerald D. Feldman, and Elisabeth Glaser (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 87–109.

principle of the self-determination of small nations.[224] One result of Prothero's work was the publication of a massive collection of studies called *Peace Handbooks*, issued by the Historical Section of the Foreign Office and containing ethnic, economic, and historical information on all historical regions in Europe, including the Balkans.[225] Other important forums of research and debate included the weekly periodical *The New Europe*, galvanized mainly by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Robert William Seton-Watson and focusing on the peoples making up Austria-Hungary,[226] and *The Slavonic Review*, edited by Bernard Pares and Robert William Seton-Watson and focusing on Central Europe and the Balkans.

In France, Aristide Briand, the prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, established a study group in February 1917 called *Comité d'études* with the task of preparing the future peace. The group was initially made up of sixteen university professors from the Sorbonne, l'Ecole Normale Supérieure, and Collège de France, including ten historians, three geographers, and one economist. Later, an additional six historians, two economists, five geographers, and five linguists joined *Comité d'études*. Although the committee did not have a major impact on the work of the French delegation at the peace conference and on the decisions reached there, it did provide valuable background information.[227] More influential was the smaller Quai d'Orsay Commission established around André Tardieu at the end of 1918, joined by experts of the *Comité d'études*, most

224 He was replaced by James Wycliffe Headlam-Morley in 1920, at a time when the conference was still deliberating over the Central European and Balkan borders.

225 On the Balkans, see *Peace Handbooks*, vol. 4: *The Balkan States* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1973).

226 On Masaryk's views and activity, see Robert J. Kerner, "Two Architects of New Europe: Masaryk and Beneš," *Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 1 (July 1921): 27–43.

227 On the work of the *Comité d'études*, see Christian Baechler and Carole Fink, eds., *L'établissement des frontières en Europe après les deux guerres mondiales | The Establishment of European Frontiers after the Two World Wars* (Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Paris, and Vienna: Peter Lang, 1996), 251–262; Olivier Lowczyk, *La fabrique de la paix. Du Comité d'études à la Conférence de la paix, l'élaboration par la France des traités de la première guerre mondiale* (Paris: Economica / Institut de Stratégie Comparée, Coll. Bibliothèque stratégique, 2010); Jean-Louis Tissier, "Le Comité d'études et les géographes," in *Dictionnaire des intellectuels français*, eds. Jacques Juillard and Michel Winock (Paris: Seuil, 1996), 347–349. For the French vision of Central Europe, see Olivier Buirette, *La France et l'Europe centrale. André Tardieu et Emmanuel de Martonne, deux visions françaises de l'Europe centrale durant l'Entre-deux-guerres* (*1919–1920 1930–1932*) (Paris: APRHC, 1997).

notably the geographer Emmanuel de Martonne, who played an important role in setting Romania's borders in Dobrudja.[228]

In the United States, the Inquiry group established within the framework of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) and led by Colonel Edward House, President Wilson's advisor, enlisted about a hundred prominent experts to discuss the postwar territorial settlements.[229] On December 22, 1917, the Inquiry group issued a report called "A Suggested Statement of Peace Terms" dealing with territorial issues concerning Belgium, northern France, Alsace-Lorraine, Italy, the Balkans, Poland, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire, and with the creation of a League of Nations.[230] Concerning the Balkans, the report condemned the "arbitrary treaty of Bucharest" signed in 1913, seeing it as "a product of the evil diplomacy which the people of the world are now determined to end."[231] Instead, it proposed a peace based on "a fair balance of nationalistic

228 See Emmanuel de Martonne, *La Dobroudja: Rapport présenté à la séance du 6 mai 1918* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1918), also published in *Travaux du Comité d'etudes*, vol. 2, *Questions européennes: Belgique, Slesvig, Tchécoslovaquie, Pologne, et Russie, Question Adriatiques, Yougoslavie, Roumanie, Turquie d'Europe et d'Asie* (Paris: Service géographique de l'armée, 1919). For French expertise on Dobrudja, see also Eugène Pittard, *La Roumanie: Valachie—Moldavie—Dobroudja, 50 illustrations, dont 35 hors-texte d'après des photographies prises par l'auteur* (Paris, 1917); Francis Lebrun, *La Dobroudja: esquisse historique, geographique, ethnographique et statistique*, with a preface by M.E. de Martonne (Études documentaries sur les questions Roumaines, 1) (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1918); Eugène Pittard, *Les peuples des Balkans: recherches anthropologiques dans la peninsule des Balkans, specialement dans la Dobroudja; avec 149 figures* (Geneva: Georg, 1920). On Romania's borders, see Jacques Bariéty, "Le Comité d'études du Quai d'Orsay et les frontières de la Grande Roumanie, 1918–1919," *Revue roumaine d'histoire* 35, nos. 1–2 (January–June 1996): 43–51. On Emmanuel de Martonne's role in drawing Romania's borders, see Emmanuelle Boulineau, "Un géographe traceur de frontières: Emmanuel de Martonne et la Roumanie," *L'espace géographique* 4 (2001): 358–369. For the role of geographers in setting other postwar borders, see Emmanuelle Boulineau, "Les géographes et les frontières austro-slovènes des Alpes orientales en 1919–1920. Entre la Mitteleuropa et les Balkans," *Revue de geographie alpine* 89, no. 4 (2001): 173–184. For the role of French geographers in setting Bulgaria's borders, see Taline Ter Minassian, "Les géographes français et la délimitation des frontières de la Bulgarie à la conférence de la paix en 1919," *Balkanologie* 6, no. 1 (December 2, 2002), http://balkanologie.revues.org/index454.html (accessed May 14, 2013).

229 On the establishment and work of the Inquiry group, see "American Plans and Preparations for the Peace Conference," in Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919: The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 1 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 7–220.

230 Ibid., 49–54.

231 *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 1, 50.

and economic considerations, applied in a generous and inves[ti]tive spirit after impartial and scientific inquiry."[232] Although the report fell short of suggesting new borders for the Balkans, it nevertheless explicitly stated, as an example, that "the area annexed by Rumania in the Dobrudja is almost surely Bulgarian in character and should be returned."[233] The recommendations of the Inquiry led to the drafting of Wilson's famous Fourteen Points, delivered to a joint session of the U.S. Congress on January 8, 1918. The U.S. delegation to Paris consisted of over 1,000 members, including about twenty-four other members of the Inquiry, actively influencing the peace settlement. To assist the work of the U.S. delegation, on January 21, 1919, a ninety-two-page summary called the *Black Book*, containing twenty-three maps, was published in about forty copies and distributed to the leaders of the delegation.[234]

Romanian and Bulgarian diplomats made sustained efforts to join these public campaigns preparing the peace. On the eve of the Paris Peace Conference, building on their previous propaganda efforts, both countries engaged in assiduous public diplomacy campaigns in support of their claims over Dobrudja, as part of their larger territorial agenda. To this end, both sides asserted that their rights to the province were irrefutable, tried to refute the claims of the other parties, and emphasized their role in promoting stability and modernization on the Lower Danube, in line with the European imperatives of the time.

On the Bulgarian side, the main crusader in the campaign for Dobrudja was the geographer and ethnographer Anastas Todorov Ishirkov (1868–1937).[235] Ishirkov studied history at the University of Sofia and completed his education in Germany. He specialized in Slavic philology in Leipzig, and completed his thesis on Southern Bulgaria in 1896,[236] under the supervision of Friedrich Ratzel. He specialized in geography at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Berlin, where he studied with Ferdinand von Richthofen. In 1898, Ishirkov became a professor of geography and ethnography at the University of Sofia (until 1933), in the Department of General and Cultural Political Geography, the History

232 *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 1, 51, correction in the original.

233 On the establishment and work of the Inquiry group, see "American Plans and Preparations for the Peace Conference," in Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919: The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 1 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 50.

234 See Wesley J. Reisser, *The Black Book: Woodrow Wilson's Secret Plan for Peace* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012).

235 On his personality and activity, see Ignat Penkov, *Anastas Ishirkov: Ocherk* (Sofia: Universitetsko izdatelstvo Kliment Ohridski, 1987); Pelo Mihaylov, *Stranitsi za profesor Anastas Ishirkov* (Plovdiv: Intelekspert-94, 2008).

236 Anastas Ischirkoff, *Südbulgarien* (Leipzig: Universität Leipzig, 1896).

and Philology Faculty, and served as faculty dean (1910–1911, 1918–1919, and 1920–1921), and rector of the University of Sofia (1915–1916). Generally regarded as the founder of geographical science in Bulgaria, Ishirkov co-created and headed the Geographical Institute of the University (1898), was later founder and chairman of the Bulgarian National Geographic Society (1918), and also became a member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. A major promoter of the Bulgarian national cause, Ishirkov was deeply involved in nationalist controversies, authoring monographs on all the territorial questions that involved Bulgaria.[237] As an expert of the Bulgarian government, Ishirkov also served on numerous cultural, political, and diplomatic missions abroad, including on the Bulgarian delegation for the signing of the peace agreement in Bucharest after the Balkan Wars (1913). From 1918 on, he took an interest in Dobrudja as well, and also wrote a memorandum to the Paris Peace Conference (1919).[238]

The most important monograph on the Bulgarian side was *Les Bulgares devant le Congrès de la Paix: documents historiques, ethnographiques et diplomatiques* (1919), edited by Yordan Ivanov, professor at the University of Sofia.[239] The book is conceived as a comprehensive portrait of the development of the Bulgarian nation, dealing with its nationality, territory, language, state, political life, religious life, literature, art, education, and public instructions. The book devotes considerable attention to Dobrudja, arguing that the province was part and parcel of Bulgaria's territorial questions at the peace congress, although this territorial question was seen as less important than the vital issue of Macedonia. Bulgarian experts and politicians assembled an array of

237 See Anastas Todorov Ishirkov, *Le nom de Bulgare: eclaircissement d'histoire et éthographie* (Librairie Centrale des Nationalités, 1918); *La Macédoine et la constitution de l'Exarchat bulgare* (*1830 á 1897*) (Lausanne, 1918); *La Bulgarie et le Mer Egée: le problème de la Thrace* (Bern, 1919); *La Bulgarie et la Dobroudja* (Bern, 1919).

238 See Anastas Ishirkov et al., *La Dobroudja: geographie, histoire, ethnographie, importance economique et politique* (Sofia: Imprimerie de la cour, 1918); Anastas Ishirkov, *Les Bulgares en Dobroudja: apercu historique et ethnographique* (Bern: Impr. Pochon-Jent & Buhler, 1919).

239 Yordan Ivanov, *Les bulgares et leurs manifestations nationales: documents historiques, ethnographiques et diplomatiques, avec trois cartes en couleurs* (Bern: P. Haupt, 1919). An expanded edition soon followed, under a slightly modified title: Jordan Ivanov, *Les bulgares devant le Congrès de la paix: documents historiques, ethnographiques et diplomatiques, avec quatre cartes en couleurs*, 2nd ed. (Bern: P. Haupt, 1919). For the Bulgarian national propaganda authenticated by the Paris Peace delegation, see Hoover War Library, *A Catalogue of Paris Peace Conference Delegation Propaganda in the Hoover War Library* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1926), 23–27.

historical documents, eyewitness accounts, diplomatic history, and statistics in order to argue for the annexation of Dobrudja.

This publication was accompanied by more specialized work dedicated exclusively to the cause of Dobrudja. In preparation for the peace conference, the Dobrudja Organization in Bulgaria published a periodical entitled *Le Mouvement Dobroudjain* as well as numerous pamphlets condemning Romania's occupation and administration of the province and asserting Bulgaria's historical rights there. The first pamphlet, entitled *The Political Fate of Dobroudja after the Berlin Congress* (1919), attempted to refute Romania's historical claims over the province and to assert Bulgaria's historical rights.[240] The pamphlet argues that, until the Treaty of Berlin, the fate of Dobroudja "was being fused entirely with that of integral Bulgaria." The authors discard Romania's historical claims to the province based on Mircea the Elder's domination as "only transitory political incidents, without any historical consequences" and thus "devoid of seriousness.[241] These events, it was claimed, had "absolutely no substantial influence over the Bulgarian character of Dobrudja, which has been and still remains a Bulgarian land, indissolubly bound up with the history and political fate of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian nation up to the time of the Berlin treaty."[242]

After asserting Bulgaria's right to the province, the pamphlet deconstructed the Romanian political discourse on Dobrudja. It closely analyzed the political debates over Dobrudja in the Romanian parliament at the time of the 1878 annexation, the province's separate administrative regime in 1878–1913, and the Bulgarians' resistance to "assimilation." Great importance was given to the discourses on Dobrudja advanced by Mihail Kogălniceanu and his son Vasile Kogălniceanu, to their struggle for local autonomy in Dobrudja, and to their denunciation of abuses against the local population. The pamphlet argued that the "assimilatory regime" instituted in Dobrudja "constitutes in itself the most striking demonstration, originating from Roumania itself, as to the indisputable Bulgarian character of Dobroudja."[243] The pamphlet also compiled a history of the Romanians' fear of the "Bulgarian danger," resulting in the "securitization" of the Bulgarian question.

The pamphlet went on to underscore "the martyrdom of the Bulgarian nation," which was split into five different political units, one of which was

240 *The Political Fate of Dobroudja after the Berlin Congress* (Sofia: Royal Court Printing-Office, 1919).

241 Ibid., 3.

242 Ibid., 4.

243 Ibid., 32.

Dobrudja under Romanian occupation. If in 1879, Bulgarian national rights were sacrificed for the greater European interest, Bulgarians were entitled, based on their suffering, to historical compensation at the Paris Peace Conference. The pamphlet emphasized Bulgaria's historical right to Dobrudja in an attempt to use it as a basis of a new peace settlement in Bulgaria's favor. The historical link between Bulgarians and Dobrudja was presented as a matter of destiny, while the Romanians were stigmatized as cruel enemies. In addition, to forge the idea of the rightful nation martyred by an oppressive occupier, the pamphlet portrayed the Romanians as former slaves who became tyrants. The pamphlet also urged Bulgarians to fight for emancipation from the Romanian "yoke:"

> Historically Dobroudja is the cradle of the first Bulgarian kingdom. Everywhere it is marked by ruins—dumb witnesses of our everlasting sufferings and of our inexhaustible national tenacity in that province, which hides within itself the immortality of our national spirit. How was it possible then in that land, the aged beds of which are saturated profusely with Bulgarian blood, fructified with the bones of our forefathers and ancestors, the air of which is their immortal breath, the ashes of which carry the protest and the curse against the long-continued oppression over it; how was it possible that the soulless, cowardly and cruel "Roumanian"—a synonym of the Roman slave in Wallachia—should find within it love and political unity?[244]

Its conclusion fused the idea of historical rights with that of natural rights to resist injustice:

> One thing, however, is indisputable—our right to live as a nation; our right to *national unification* [emphasis added] without which such an existence is impossible. That right today no one will dare to question. It gave force to our arms and it makes our victory obligatory for all, because it appeared as a natural social reaction against the injustice perpetrated against us, a restitution of the international harmony, which was violated by such powers and men. Is it thinkable that this disharmony could be a result even of the present war? Is it thinkable that this disharmony will be the one which will guarantee the peace and the expected international equity and justice?

244 Ibid., 31.

> Herein centers the problem, which has to be solved by the future Peace Conference. Let us be prepared for it, so that we may defend even there the just cause of our arms and the judicial results of our victory.[245]

The Romanians soon reacted. Since Romania proper was not only isolated from its allies but also under quasi-military occupation by the Central Powers, a concerted public diplomacy campaign could be initiated only abroad, coordinated by the pro-Entente Romanian politicians and academics who left the country as soon as Marghiloman's collaborationist government took power.[246] Based in allied or neutral countries, these politicians and scholars assiduously engaged in propaganda, trying to keep alive Western diplomatic interest in the Romanian cause. This activity was centered around *Comité National de l'Unité Roumaine* (Committee of Romanian National Unity), established in Paris in January 1917 under the leadership of the conservative politician Take Ionescu. The main voice of the Committee was the conservative newspaper *La Roumanie*, established at the turn of the century in Iaşi and Paris and published in French. The newspaper ceased publication in November 1916, after the German occupation of Bucharest, but was successfully relaunched in Paris on January 17, 1918, under Pavel Brătășanu, Constantin Bann, Constantin Mille, and Emile D. Fague. The newspaper was published until June 12, 1919, and functioned as an "*organe hebdomadaire des revendications et des intérêts roumains*" (weekly organ of the Romanian claims and interests) and, after October 17, 1918, as an "*organe hebdomadaire de Comité National de l'Unite Nationale roumaine*" (weekly organ of the Committee of Romanian National Unity). *La Roumanie* published numerous articles on Romania's historical rights to Dobrudja as well.[247] A major figure in this campaign was Oreste Tafrali, who had earned his doctorate at Sorbonne in 1912 and who in 1918 published *La Roumanie Transdanubiene* (*La Dobroudja*).[248]

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245 Ibid., 33–34.

246 In his memoirs, Minister of Justice Constantin Argetoianu claims that, on the eve of signing the preliminary peace treaty, Germany and Austria-Hungary intended to force a large number of pro-Entente Romanian politicians into exile in order to minimize domestic resistance to the collaborationist government led by Marghiloman. Although this plan was ultimately abandoned, the politicians who left of their own will would prove instrumental in organizing pro-Romania propaganda abroad. See Argetoianu, *Memorii. Partea a V-a 1918*, 35.

247 See Oreste Trafali, "La Dobroudja et les prétentions bulgares, par un autochtone," *La Roumanie*, no. 5 (February 14, 1918).

248 Oreste Trafali, *La Roumanie Transdanubiene* (*La Dobroudja*) (Paris: 1918).

In Romania, soon after the war, the Society for Research and Study on Dobrudja resumed the publication of its magazine *Arhiva Dobrogei* (January–April 1919). Its editorials provided detailed overviews of Bulgaria propaganda campaigns on Dobrudja, accompanied by critical rebukes.[249] In the fall of 1918, in anticipation of the peace conference, Prime Minister Ion I.C. Brătianu, the leader of the National Liberal Party, tasked the Dobrudjan politician Ioan N. Roman with writing a new, comprehensive memorandum on Romania's rights on Dobrudja, to answer Bulgaria's latest propaganda claims. Roman wrote a political pamphlet entitled *Drepturile, sacrificiile şi munca noastră in Dobrudja faţă de pretenţiile bulgarilor* (Our Rights, Sacrifice, and Work in Dobrudja versus the Bulgarians' Claims).[250] Its main aim was to refute "the mystifications" disseminated by the "Bulgarian patriots" Lyubomir Miletich, Anastas Todorov Ishirkov, D. Rizov, Georgi Danailov, Mihail Arnaudov, Stoyan Romanski, and others in various European capitals, and to "restore the historical truth" by affirming the "historical, ethnographic, geographical, and economic rights we [the Romanians] have in Dobrudja."[251] The manifesto was conceived as a direct response to Bulgaria's propaganda campaign on Dobrudja:

> For 30 years, an assiduous propaganda campaign has been conducted in Bulgaria, in schools and military barracks, in the press and in textbooks, in public meetings and "patriotic" associations, aimed at preparing the young generations to fight and sacrifice for this "Greater Bulgaria."[252]

This campaign, noted Roman, intensified on the eve of and during the Great War:

> Aiming at convincing the European public opinion of their historical, ethnographic, and political rights, all statesmen, university professors, career diplomats, journalists, etc., have transformed themselves into propagators of "Greater Bulgaria," and their work proceeds, in all European languages,

249 For such partisan overviews, see I.N. Roman, "Propaganda pentru Bulgaria mare si Dobrogea bulgarească," and Constantin Moisil, "Lupta pentru drepturile românești asupra Dobrogei," in *Arhiva Dobrogei, Revista Societăţii pentru cercetarea şi studierea Dobrogei*, vol. 2 (1919) (Bucharest: Tipografia Curţii Regale, 1920), 9–17, and 153–181, respectively.

250 Ioan N. Roman, *Drepturile, sacrificiile şi munca noastră in Dobrudja faţă de pretenţiile bulgarilor*, first published in *Analele Dobrogei* 3, no. 4 (October–December 1922): 445–501, including a preface by the author.

251 Roman, *Drepturile*, 445.

252 Ibid., 448.

> with a stubbornness specific to their race and with a luxury that is evidently sustained by certain chapters of the Bulgarian state budget.[253]

At the order of Prime Minister General Coandă, a few copies of the memorandum were printed by the Romanian Army and distributed to the members of the Romanian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference.[254] During the conference, Romania's public diplomacy abroad showed renewed vigor. Efforts were naturally centered on Paris, which then teemed with thousands of diplomats and journalists from all over the world. The diplomatic campaign mobilized all Romanian personalities who had French (or Western) contacts, such as Elena Văcărescu, among others. A successful author who wrote in French and was the scion of a prominent aristocratic family, Văcărescu had settled in Paris in 1885 and was well connected in intellectual and political circles. The most illustrious participant in this public diplomacy campaign was Queen Marie of Romania. Born into the British royal family and holding the title of Princess Marie of Edinburgh, Queen Marie had been an energetic supporter of Romania's entry into World War I on the Entente's side. At the end of the war, Queen Marie enjoyed great popularity, influence, and prestige in Romania and abroad. Capitalizing on this sympathy, she made a lengthy diplomatic tour of Paris (March 5–12, March 30–April 16, 1919) and London (March 12–30). She maintained contacts with leading Allied politicians such as Raymond Poincaré and George Clemenceau in France; King George V and Queen Mary of England; Lord Curzon, Winston Churchill, and Waldorf Astor in England; as well as with U.S. president Woodrow Wilson. Most importantly, Queen Marie was directly involved in the peace negotiations in support of and even as part of the Romanian delegation. All this further fostered Romania's cause among the countries of the Entente.[255]

In parallel, propaganda efforts were conducted in other allied countries, such as the United States. There the Romanian National League of America, based in Cleveland, Ohio, published the brochure *The Dobrogea*, asserting Romania's historical right to the province, Romania's civilizational work in the province, and Dobrudja's vital importance for the country's economy.[256]

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253 Ibid., 448.

254 Ibid., 446.

255 For a report on Queen Marie's visit to Paris, see *La victoire*: *supplément au Panorama de la Guerre, précédé de l'Allemagne vaincue, étude d'ensemble par le lieutenant-colonel Rousset* (Paris: Librairie Jules Tallandie, June 10, 1919), 195, 203.

256 Vasile Stoica, *The Dobrogea*, part of the book series The Roumanians and Their Lands (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1919).

Overall, although their main theses and general conclusions were obviously antithetical, Romanian and Bulgarian works on Dobrudja were similar in their style and structure of argumentation. Both national narratives on Dobrudja were based on the concept of self-determination, proclaimed as sacred and inalienable. Both parties regarded the principle of nationality as the basis of international law and employed it as a supreme argument entitling them to the province. Not surprisingly, both Romanian and Bulgarian works tried to arrogate this principle for themselves, denying the national character of the enemy state and accusing it of imperialist intentions. Thus, in late 1917, commenting on the chances of an alliance between Romania and Bulgaria under the aegis of the Central Powers, *L'Echo de Bulgarie*, the official newspaper of the Bulgarian royal court, asked rhetorically: "Are Romanians ready to abandon their imperialist policy and to accept for Dobrudja the only fair solution that will give peace its necessary durability [e.g., assigning it to Bulgaria], a solution based on the strict application of the principle of nationalities to the Balkans?"[257]

The principle of nationality was combined, however, with a multitude of historical, geographic, ethnographic, economic, and geopolitical arguments. One main area of confrontation over Dobrudja was that of historical rights: the Romanians argued that they had always been the leading autochthonous element in Dobrudja and the only "natural" inhabitants of the province, as they were a product of Roman rule over the province. As such, the Romanians were destined to "bring back" civilization to the province after the Ottoman decay. They also argued that the Bulgarians were relative newcomers, as they arrived in Dobrudja only in the seventh century, and their possession of the province was temporary. The Bulgarians did not have historical rights to Dobrudja, as the Byzantines entrusted the province to the Wallachian prince Mircea the Elder, who lost it to the Ottoman Empire, and it was the Romanian and Russian armies who liberated it five centuries later, in 1878.[258] For the Bulgarians, however, Dobrudja was the cradle of the Bulgarian Kingdom and an integral part of Bulgarian lands, even under Ottoman occupation. They also pointed out, in turn, that Wallachian rule over Dobrudja was short and thus insignificant.

To substantiate their historical rights to the province, both sides backed their claims with "ethnographic" arguments. The Bulgarian side claimed that Bulgarians had always formed the majority of the population in Dobrudja, except for the most recent period, when an "artificial" Romanian majority was

257 *L'Echo de Bulgarie* (December 25, 1917), cited in *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 8 Décembre 1917 au 5 janvier 1918*, 1.

258 For a comprehensive summary of these arguments, see Roman, *Drepturile*.

created through ethnic colonization. By contrast, the Romanian side argued that the Romanians had always been the most numerous ethnic group in the province. As for the Bulgarians, their ethnic presence was rather sparse, as the Ottoman colonization with Turks and Tartars isolated Dobrudja from Bulgaria proper. It was only in the second quarter of the nineteenth century that the Bulgarians emigrated in large numbers to Dobrudja; they came mostly from the Bulgarian communities colonized by Russia in Southern Bessarabia after the Russo-Turkish War of 1828–1829. Historical and ethnic arguments were closely linked with geographical arguments: both sides held that Dobrudja formed a geographical unit with the rest of their country. The Romanians claimed that the province was a natural extension of Wallachia, offering it access to the sea past the meanders of the Danube. Far from being a natural obstacle, the Danube actually provided a strong link between Wallachia and Dobrudja. The Bulgarians, in turn, claimed that Dobrudja was an integral geographical part of Bulgaria. They regarded the Danube as the natural border of Bulgaria and denounced Romania's presence south of the Danube, in the Balkan peninsula proper, as an invasion: "Dobrudja is inseparably linked to Danube Bulgaria. It is a part of the Balkan peninsula, with which it forms a geological unity. Ethnographically, the lowest part of the Danube divides the Romanian and the Bulgarian tribes. . . . Only the Danube is the natural border which can harness Romania's big ambitions."[259] Closely linked with the geographical argument was the economic argument: both parties tried to demonstrate the essential role Dobrudja played in their national economy. Romania argued that Dobrudja provided it vital access to the sea, without which the Romanian economy would suffocate, especially during the winter, when navigation on the Danube was almost impossible. The Romanians maintained that for Bulgaria, Dobrudja was merely an extension of its long coast, which was dominated by Varna harbor, so the province did not add anything vital to the Bulgarian economy. The Bulgarians, for their part, argued that Romania did not need Dobrudja, as the Danubian harbors or Galați and Brăila fulfilled precisely the same function as the newer harbor of Constanţa. Moreover, the loss of Dobrudja would actually facilitate Romania's economic integration with the Central Powers: "The removal of Romania from the Black Sea coast is not going to undermine the economic relations that already exist between it and the Central forces. As earlier, Romania will be forced to seek in Central Europe additional markets for its grain and petrol products, and once it starts to seek them there, it will inevitably open its markets widely to the products of

259 "Rumănija Balkanska dărzhava li e?" (Is Romania a Balkan Country?), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 1, no. 35 (September 14, 1917): 1.

Austrian and German industry."[260] By contrast, the Bulgarian experts argued that Dobrudja was an essential part of the Bulgarian economy, especially for agriculture and animal husbandry. To neutralize Romania's economic arguments, some Bulgarian authors argued that Bulgaria was ready to provide Romania with a narrow corridor of access to the sea in return for its annexation of all of Dobrudja.

Besides asserting their country's historical rights to Dobrudja and refuting the counter-arguments of the other side, the Romanian and Bulgarian national discourses had the challenging task of harmonizing their national goals with the evolving international geopolitical situation. To this end, both countries arrogated a "role conception" in foreign policy, claiming possession of Dobrudja in order to fulfill a European mission in the province. As shown above, Romanian politicians were the first to formulate such a foreign-policy doctrine. In 1878–1879, Romanian statesmen claimed that Europe granted them possession of Dobrudja to fulfill two interrelated missions: to neutralize the Lower Danube by preventing Russia's domination and to spread modern civilization in an underdeveloped part of the "Orient." Later, capitalizing on the achievements of Romanian rule in Northern Dobrudja, Romanian politicians argued that Romania was the true continuator of Roman civilization in the region and the only state able to bring modernity to Dobrudja after the failure of the Ottoman experiment. In turn, the Bulgarians argued that Romanian rule in Dobrudja was a barbaric "yoke" since it denied political rights to the local inhabitants; the Bulgarians asserted that they were the true bearers of the civilizing mission in Dobrudja. These antagonistic views generated numerous stereotypes in the image of the Other. Both sides engaged in discursions in race and national psychology to capture the most dominant "negative" personality traits of the enemy and to contrast them with the "positive" traits of their own people.[261]

Formulating a viable geopolitical role model was, however, a particularly daunting task for the Romanian and Bulgarian politicians, given that the competition among the Great Powers in the region had become more intense at the turn of the century. Mirroring the polarization of the Great Powers in rival political-military alliances, political elites in the two countries were divided over the foreign policy course to be followed during World War I, oscillating between the Entente and the Great Powers. In Bulgaria, the pro-German camp

260 Ant. Borlakov, "Centralnite sili i Dobrudzha" (The Central Powers and Dobrudja), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 1, no. 33 (September 10, 1917): 1.

261 On this issue, see also Blagovest Njagulov, "Les images de l'autre chez les bulgares et les Roumains (1878–1944)," *Etudes balcaniques* 2 (1995): 3–25.

led by Prime Minister Vasil Radoslavov (July 17, 1913–June 21, 1918) prevailed. In 1915, the country broke with its tradition of close cooperation with Russia and opted to ally with the Central Powers. In the short term, this policy seemed to bear fruit. In 1917–1918, capitalizing on the Central Powers' temporary hegemony over the region, Bulgarian politicians were quick to proclaim the beginning of a new geopolitical order in Europe, which had at its very center the alliance between the German *Mitteleuropa* and the Slavic world, which in their view was represented in the Balkans primarily by Bulgaria. According to the Germanophile, semi-official newspaper *Kambana* (Камбана):

> A great political event will happen. Western civilization will be transferred thousands of kilometers to the East, and humanity will enter a new phase of development. Central Europe imposes itself as the leader of this world. In this new German-Slav political and cultural system, our people and our country will hold an honorable place. A splendid star rises on the horizon, and its light will cast a shadow over the star of the Anglo-French power.[262]

By annexing all of Dobrudja, the Bulgarians hoped to appropriate Romania's role conception in foreign policy. They argued that, by fighting alongside Russia in the Great War, Romania betrayed its European mandate of neutralizing the Lower Danube against Russian interference. Bulgaria was, therefore, entitled to take over the European mandate in Dobrudja from Romania and to replace it as a regional power broker, a role that Romania exercised in the Second Balkan War against Bulgaria's interests: "Romania should no longer play the role of arbiter in the Balkans, a role that she owed to her alliance with the Central Powers. This role now belongs to Bulgaria, and Romania will be our friend only if she renounces that role and returns Dobrudja to us, because that is our property."[263]

Yet the Bulgarian government's failure to acquire all of Dobrudja under the Treaty of Bucharest in May 1918 led to Prime Minister Radoslavov's resignation in favor of a more moderate government led by Aleksandar Malinov (June 21, 1918–November 28, 1918), which had the task of finding a *modus vivendi* with the Entente. Malinov's failure to sign a separate peace and, ultimately, Bulgaria's defeat in the war led to the abdication of Tsar Ferdinand, who was

262 *Kambana*, December 18, 1918, cited in *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 8 Décembre 1917 au 5 janvier 1918*, 1.

263 *Mir*, December 25 and 27, 1917, cited in *Bulletin périodique de la presse bulgare du 8 Décembre 1917 au 5 janvier 1918*, 1.

forced to flee Bulgaria on October 3, 1918. This was followed by the resignation of the Malinov government at the end of November 1918. At the Paris Peace Conference, the new Bulgarian government led by Teodor Teodorov (November 28, 1918–October 6, 1919) had the challenging—almost self-defeating—task of condemning the alliance with the Central Powers as anti-national and anti-democratic while at the same time continuing to support Bulgaria's territorial agenda. "History will show that the policy followed by King Ferdinand and the Radoslavov government was, first and foremost, an violent imposition over the will of the Bulgarian people,"[264] argued Prime Minister Teodorov on September 19, 1919, in advance of the peace treaty. However, while criticizing the abuses of the previous government and even its human-rights violations in the occupied territories, he rejected the allegation of Bulgarian imperialism: "We were criticized for having pursued an imperialist policy. In fact, we have never wanted more than the fulfillment of our unity."[265] This political turn culminated with the advent to power of the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union (*Balgarski Zemedelski Naroden Sayuz*), headed by Aleksandar Stamboliyski (October 14, 1919–June 9, 1923), which also led to the complete repudiation of the Radoslavov government's policy as anti-national and Radoslavov's sentence to death in absentia.

In the same vein, in 1916 Romania renounced its 1883 alliance with the Central Powers in favor of the Entente. However, the country's rapid defeat on the southern front created new political realities: the imperatives of the separate peace brought to power the pro-German faction represented by the Marghiloman government. In its search for legitimacy, the Marghiloman government sued the previous Brătianu government, holding it responsible for Romania's "national catastrophe." At the same time, Marghiloman capitalized on the annexation of Bessarabia to argue that the interests of Romania and the Central Powers naturally coincided. These views were opposed by the pro-Entente faction, which, though censored at the time, managed to make its voice heard. Thus, countering the pro-German official discourse, historian Nicolae Iorga denounced Bulgaria's attempt to insert the fulfillment of its national goals into Frederick Naumann's geopolitical vision of a German-dominated *Mitteleuropa*. Arguing that the Bulgarian aim of providing a territorial and political bridge between the Central Powers and the Balkans was illusory, Iorga called instead for the restoration of the old geopolitical order in the Balkans built on the "ancient Roman legacy" and led by France and Great Britain,

264 *La victoire*: *supplément au Panorama de la Guerre*, 380.

265 Ibid.

with Romania playing a leading role as provider of stability in the region.[266] Finally, the changing fortunes of the war returned the pro-Entente faction to power. The new Brătianu government (November 29, 1918–September 26, 1919) repealed all laws implemented by the collaborationist Marghiloman government as illegal (including the separate peace with the Central Powers, which was never sanctioned by the king).

The Dobrudjan Question at the Paris Peace Conference

The end of World War I opened the stage for a complex diplomatic confrontation over contested territorial "questions" at the Paris Peace Conference. Analysis of the practical details of the diplomatic negotiations over the issue of Dobrudja—even if they were couched in a drier and more formal language than the public debates on national identity analyzed in the first part of this essay—reveals that, in the Great Powers' geopolitical visions, the province remained a multiethnic borderland and a bargaining chip for settling other, more "important" territorial issues.

Romania and Bulgaria approached the peace conference from markedly different positions.[267] If during the negotiations leading to the 1918 Treaty of Bucharest, Bulgaria was evidently in a more favorable position, both militarily and diplomatically, at the Paris Peace Conference, Romania had several political advantages over Bulgaria. First, Romania re-entered the war on November 10, 1918, and found itself on the winning side, while Bulgaria had to sign an armistice with the Entente Powers and was on the losing side. On political grounds, a border adjustment in Dobrudja in Bulgaria's favor was thus improbable from the start. Second, at the end of the war, Romania had a standing army and could thus not only secure its new territorial gains but also play an active role in regional politics (see its 1919 campaign leading to the occupation of Budapest), while Bulgaria was defeated and had to disarm. Third, at the

266 See N. Iorga, "D. Naumann și Bulgaria," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 227 (August 18, 1918): 1; N. Iorga, "D. Naumann și România," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 228 (August 19, 1918): 1; N. Iorga, "Și puțintică istorie, cu privire la cartea lui Naumann," *Neamul Românesc* 13, no. 230 (August 21, 1918): 1.

267 On the activity of Romania's delegation at the peace conference, with a focus on Brătianu's activity, see Sherman D. Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study of the Diplomacy of Ioan I.C. Brătianu* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1962). See also Viorica Moisuc, coord., *România și Conferința De Pace De La Paris (1918–1920): Triumful principiului naționalităților* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1983).

Paris Peace Conference, Romania had in France its most important and influential ally, a political alliance forged through their close military cooperation during the war. Bulgaria, for its part, could only count on the pro-Bulgarian attitude of some American experts, mediated mostly by the Bulgarian graduates and American missionaries linked with the Robert College in Istanbul.

Despite these inauspicious circumstances, Bulgaria's hopes for a favorable peace were boosted by President Wilson's proclamation of the Fourteen Points in January 1918. More and more willing to exit the war, Bulgaria welcomed Wilson's speech, hoping for a favorable solution to its claims at the future peace conference. During the peace conference, this principle was to also be embraced by Bulgarian publications in Dobrudja. Claiming that "Wilson's principle [is] a Bulgarian principle,"[268] *Vestnik Dobrudzha* argued, "We are defeated, it is true, but this does not mean that we have lost our rights."[269]

For its part, the Inquiry report on the Balkans recommended that the U.S. diplomatic attention "may first be directed to Bulgaria as a weak section of the German line."[270] It also pointed out that "a satisfactory settlement in the Balkans" needed to make "Serbia strong and Bulgaria satisfied," in order to minimize the risk of the latter's "exploitation for political and military purposes."[271] On the eve of Bulgaria's military capitulation, Prime Minister Malinov argued in a note to U.S. president Wilson dated September 27, 1918, that Bulgaria "feels that the idea and the cause for which she is struggling find place side by side with the principles in behalf of which America interfered in this war" and thus his country "is glad and ready to follow that path."[272] In the words of the U.S. consul general at Sofia, Murphy, this meant that "Bulgaria accepts with good will that the President should be the arbiter of the Balkans."[273] These positions, and the fact that Bulgaria was never officially at war with the United States, created the premises of a *de facto* alliance between the United States and

268 "Principăt na Uilsona—Bălgarski princip" (Wilson's Principle: A Bulgarian Principle), *Vestnik Dobrudzha* 3, no. 220 (March 19, 1919): 1.

269 "Dobrudzha i Rumănija" (Dobrudja and Romania), *Vestnik Dobrudja* 3, no. 214 (February 26, 1919): 1.

270 Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919: The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 1 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 47.

271 *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 1, 30, 45.

272 *United States Department of State: Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1918. Supplement 1, *The World War*, vol. 1, part 1: *The Continuation and Conclusion of the War: Participation of the United States* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1918), 325.

273 *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1918, supp. 1, part 1, 327.

Bulgaria, with the United States acting as a determined supporter of Southern Dobrudja's retrocession to Bulgaria.

At the Paris Peace Conference, the issue of Northern Dobrudja was not debated, as its return to Romania was regarded as natural and incontestable both on political and ethnic grounds. In contrast, the question of Southern Dobrudja was one of the most debated territorial issues, generating a veritable diplomatic saga resembling, *mutatis mutandis*, the arduous diplomatic episodes over the status of Northern Dobrudja in the San Stefano and Berlin Treaties of 1878. As happened forty years earlier, the question was settled by the Great Powers, without the direct participation of the Balkan states. Moreover, as in 1878, the question of Dobrudja "was intimately connected with that of Bessarabia," as the French expert Larouche pointed out.[274] Due to the importance of Southern Dobrudja in shaping the future of Romanian-Bulgarian interstate relations and geopolitical stability in the whole region, the Powers devoted considerable energy and time to debating this question, at various political or expert levels. Two main positions dominated the debates. On the one hand, the United States militated for the retrocession of Southern Dobrudja to Bulgaria. The U.S. position on Southern Dobrudja had been spelled out in the Inquiry's December 1917 report "A Suggested Statement of Peace Terms." Although the report fell short of suggesting new borders for the Balkans, it nevertheless stated explicitly that "the area annexed by Rumania in the Dobrudja [in 1913] is almost surely Bulgarian in character and should be returned."[275] On the other hand, France—also supported by its close allies—argued that the Romanian-Bulgarian border was set prior to World War I and as such should not be subject to change.

The question of Dobrudja was first addressed by the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Great Powers on May 16, 1919. Since, as mentioned above, Romania's possession of Northern Dobrudja was not questioned, the talks mostly focused instead on Southern Dobrudja. During the meeting, the U.S. delegation proposed a new border line in Southern Dobrudja, in between the two previous borders set in 1878 and 1913, which awarded a sizable strip of land to Bulgaria. French diplomatic representative André Tardieu replied that the American proposal touched upon "a very delicate matter," as "it was difficult to ask an Allied country after a victorious war to yield to an enemy state territory

274 *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 8, 838.

275 On the establishment and work of the Inquiry group, see "American Plans and Preparations for the Peace Conference," in *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 1, here 50.

which it had possessed before the war."[276] The foreign ministers of the Great Powers seemed to concur that the new border would be preferable to the restoration of the 1913 line. Yet as British foreign secretary Arthur James Balfour put it, "Had the Conference been dealing with an enemy state, it would have applied its principles without reservation, but, as in this instance, the case affected an Allied State, no modification, even according to the ethnological principle, could be made without the consent of the Allied State."[277] As a compromise, the ministers decided to suggest that Romania voluntarily negotiate with Bulgaria on a new border settlement in Southern Dobrudja. They acknowledged, nevertheless, that that was unlikely.[278] Strongly committed to achieving a new border settlement in Dobrudja, U.S. representatives argued that the most effective solution would be to offer Romania an alternative territorial compensation for ceding Southern Dobrudja. The decision on Dobrudja was thus postponed until the discussion on the frontier between Romania and Serbia in the Banat, as there were indications that Romania might agree to give up land in Southern Dobrudja in exchange for acquiring the entire Banat.[279]

The issue of Southern Dobrudja was taken up anew by the foreign ministers of the Great Powers on May 23, 1919, when discussing the "Jugo-slavs" frontier with Romania in the Banat. U.S. secretary of state Robert Lansing once again expressed concern that the preservation of the 1913 border in Dobrudja "would produce in the Balkans a situation analogous to that of Alsace-Lorraine before the war."[280] He also argued that, since the United States had not been at war with Bulgaria, the United States did not have a direct means of settling the issue, except for tying it with another litigious territorial question that was to be solved, such as the Banat.[281] The ministers were critical of the way Romania acquired Southern Dobrudja in 1913 and acknowledged that "the frontier in the Dobrudja was manifestly out of relation with the equilibrium of the population."[282] Yet, since in the end Romania was not awarded any additional territory in the Banat, no concession could be asked in Southern Dobrudja, and so a decision on the issue was again adjourned.[283]

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276 FRUS, United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919: The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 4 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 717.

277 Ibid., 718.

278 Ibid.

279 Ibid., 719. See also the statement by the Italian minister Sonino, in ibid., 750.

280 Ibid., 750.

281 Ibid.

282 Ibid.

283 Ibid., 751.

In July 1919, the Central Territorial Commission, entrusted by the Central Council with proposing a boundary line for Bulgaria, proved unable to reach a unanimous decision on the boundary in Dobrudja. The majority of the committee argued that "it is not possible, by a decision of the Conference, to impose upon Roumania a change of the boundary existing in 1914."[284] Therefore, the majority proposed retaining the 1914 boundary. It also recommended that the Conference "interrogate" the Romanian government on whether it was willing to enter negotiations with Bulgaria over the issue, "but without making a suggestion in the matter."[285] The American delegation adopted a dissenting opinion, arguing that, in the interest of the general peace, Romania should "return the territories which she annexed by force in 1913, since she receives now at the hands of these powers much more extensive territories taken from Austria, thanks to the military efforts of the Allied and Associated Powers."[286]

The report of the Central Committee was discussed at a meeting of the heads of delegations of the five Great Powers held on July 31, 1919, in connection with the question of Western Thrace. To the American proposal that Bulgaria should retain Western Thrace, Tardieu objected that the proposal was too generous with a defeated state: "If Bulgaria were given Southern Dobrudja, Eastern and Western Thrace and were only asked to contribute two and a half billion francs, this would amount to an invitation to begin again."[287] A similar connection between Western Thrace and Southern Dobrudja was made, from a different standpoint, by the Greek prime minister Elefthérios Venizelos. Eager to get a better deal in Western Thrace for his country at the expense of Bulgaria, Venizelos suggested that Southern Dobrudja be returned to Bulgaria to disarm its resistance to the prospective peace treaty.[288] If the Bulgarians refused to cede Western Thrace to Greece as part of this deal, Venizelos proposed a joint military action of Serbia, Greece, and possibly Romania, followed by further annexations. Eager to persuade the Great Powers to adopt his proposal, Venizelos predicted that "Bulgaria would not abandon the Dobroudja without contest."[289]

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284 United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, vol. 7 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 242.

285 Ibid., 243.

286 Ibid.

287 "Notes of a Meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Great Powers held in M. Pichon's Room at the Quai d'Orsay, Paris, July 31, 1919," in United States Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, vol. 11 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 440.

288 The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, vol. 11 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 539–540.

289 "Notes of a Meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Great Powers held in M. Pichon's Room at the Quai d'Orsay, Paris, on Thursday, August 5, 1919, at 3:30 p.m," *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 11, 541.

The question of Southern Dobrudja was revisited at the meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Great Powers that took place on August 1, 1919, when the province was presented as a possible tradeoff to extending Romania's border farther into Bessarabia. On that occasion, Balfour argued that Romania needed to be forced to accept a compromise in Southern Dobrudja, since it received a sizable addition to its territory.[290] Furthermore, claimed Balfour, "Romanian statements did not really deny that the Southern part of the Dobrudja should be granted to Bulgaria." This conviction was reiterated by General Baird, who argued, "Should the Dobrudja be returned to Bulgaria, the Roumanians would never go to war to get it back, because the Roumanian people would feel no enthusiasm on the subject."[291] In the end, unable to find a feasible solution on Dobrudja, the representatives of the Great Powers agreed to postpone the decision and to proceed with the preparations on the treaty with Bulgaria.[292]

At a September 2 meeting of the Council of Heads of Delegations, Balfour reiterated the fact that "the original idea of the Council had been that the southern portion of Dobrudja was properly speaking, Bulgarian but that as it was Roumanian territory, and as Roumania was an Allied and friendly Power, she could not be forced to cede any portion of her territory to an enemy State." Nevertheless, in view of Romania's recent actions in Hungary, which violated the Conference's recommendation, Balfour argued that "Roumania had almost ceased to have that character," a situation that would authorize the Conference to take action.[293] Impatient with Romania's policy, U.S. representatives even proposed a naval demonstration at the Black Sea, a suggestion rejected by the other Allies.[294] Another American proposal was to insert an article in the treaty with Bulgaria stating: "The Principal Allied and Associated Powers reserve the right to examine the title to possession of the Dobrudja, and to invite Roumania to cede to Bulgaria any part of the Dobrudja where the Roumanians are in the minority and the Bulgars in the majority, under conditions which the Allied and Associated Powers shall consider just and equitable."[295] The Council debated whether this note was to be included in the treaty or simply sent as a letter to the Romanian or Bulgarian governments.[296]

290 *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 11, 458.

291 Ibid., 512.

292 Ibid., 459.

293 United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, vol. 8 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 57.

294 Ibid., 60.

295 Appendix B to HD-48, *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 8, 125.

296 *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 8, 856–857.

On September 3, at a meeting of the Commissioners and Technical Advisers of the American Commission, the question of Southern Dobrudja was broached in connection with Bukovina and Bessarabia. However, it soon became apparent that, since the U.S. delegation was reluctant to endorse a territorial division of Russia, no favorable deal could be presented to Romania in Bessarabia in exchange for Southern Dobrudja. As an alternative, at the Meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the five Great Powers on September 5, 1919, the American delegate Polk pointed out that Romania's acquisition of Transylvania and Bukovina "might be made contingent on her yielding ground in the Dobrudja."[297] This proposal was rejected by France on the count that such a condition would violate the ethnological principle behind the assignment of borders in those regions. Thus the Dobrudja question could not be linked to the question of Transylvania or Bukovina.[298] It was finally agreed that the treaty with Bulgaria should restore the frontier line between Romania and Bulgaria that existed at the outbreak of the war.[299] This territorial settlement was contested by the Bulgarian government, which, in its October 24 response to the treaty, demanded "that the final status of that region [Dobrudja] be settled by the Allied and Associated Governments."[300] The Allied Powers replied that "in view of the object of the present Treaty, the Dobrudja question is out of place" and therefore "cannot be dealt with therein."[301]

The postwar status quo was ultimately settled by the Treaty of Neully between Bulgaria and the Entente, signed on November 27, 1918. The treaty imposed heavy territorial losses, war reparations, and disarmament obligations on Bulgaria and was therefore perceived in Bulgaria as a "Second National

297 Ibid., 117.

298 See in this respect, a proposal by M. Tittoni of Italy, in ibid., 117.

299 Ibid., 118.

300 "Notes of a Meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Great Powers Held in M. Pichon's Room, Quai d'Orsay, Paris, on Saturday, November 1, 1919, at 10 a.m.," *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 8, 884. On the activity of the Bulgarian delegation and the memoranda sent to the conference, see Ministerstvo na vŭnshnite raboti, *The Bulgarian Question and the Balkan States* (Sofia: State Printing Press, 1919); Ivan E. Geshov and Dmitri Tsokoff, *Mémoire adressé à la conférence de la paix* (n.p., 1919); *Conditions of Peace with Bulgaria: Observations of the Bulgarian Delegation on the Conditions of Peace with Bulgaria* (Paris: Imprimerie H. Elias, 1919); *Observations présentées par la délégation bulgare sur le projet du traité de paix avec la Bulgarie* (n.p., 1919).

301 "Reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to the Observations of the Bulgarian Delegation on the Conditions of Peace, Paris, November 3, 1919," *The Paris Peace Conference*, vol. 8, 901, 884.

Catastrophe," the first being the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest.[302] The country was forced to "recognize and accept" the new postwar frontiers as set by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers. In Dobrudja, the border between Romania and Bulgaria reverted to its position as of August 1, 1914, thus returning both Northern and Southern Dobrudja to Romania. In addition, Bulgaria agreed to treat as void all treaties it had signed with Russia, the successor states of the former Tsarist Empire, and Romania (Article 171),[303] and to renounce "any benefit disclosed by the Treaties of Bucharest and Brest-Litovsk, 1918, and by the Treaties supplementary thereto" (Article 143).[304]

The Forceful Entente, 1940: From History and Geography to Geopolitics

In the interwar period, interstate relations between Romania and Bulgaria remained particularly strained. At the grassroots level, the outcome of the war generated major changes in the outlook and mode of action of the Bulgarian organizations in Dobrudja. First, following Bulgaria's defeat in the war, the leading organization, *Dobrudzhanska organizatsia*, was discontinued; its program and leadership were openly contested from within by rival factions. Soon, a plethora of new organizations emerged, pushing for the autonomy of Dobrudja within Greater Romania; this status, they hoped would eventually lead to Dobrudjan self-determination and union with Bulgaria. Among them, the most notable were the *Dobrudzhanski vatreshen tsentralen revolyutsionen komitet* (Dobrudja Internal Central Revolutionary Committee), founded in Varna (1919–1921), and the *Dobrudzhanska Natsionalnoosvoboditelna avtonomistka organizatsia* (Dobrudja National Liberation Autonomist Organization, 1919–1923).[305] Second, these new organizations were forced to activate in exile, mostly on Bulgarian soil. Third, a process of political radicalization occurred; the most militant organizations openly embraced terrorism to destabilize Romanian rule in Dobrudja. The violent actions of Bulgarian paramilitary groups linked mainly with the Macedonian organization Ohrana (and

302 Crampton, *Bulgaria*, 219.

303 *Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Bulgaria and Protocol: Signed at Neuilly-Sur-Seine, November 27, 1919* (Ottawa: J.D. Tach, Printer to the King, 1920), 55.

304 Ibid., 48.

305 The detailed activity of these organizations falls outside the scope of this essay. For a brief overview of their profile and activities, see *Almanah na balgarskite natsionalni dvizheniya sled 1878 g.*, 142, 144.

generically called *Komiti* in Bulgarian or *comitagii* in Romania), in particular, created continuous unrest on the Romanian-Bulgarian border in Dobrudja.[306] Fourth, after the deception caused by the attitude of Bulgaria's wartime allies on the Dobrudjan question, the left wing of the Bulgarian Dobrudjan movement moved closer to Soviet Russia and pushed, from a Marxist-Leninist standpoint, for the establishment of a Dobrudjan autonomous region within a larger, would-be international proletarian federation controlled by Moscow. The most important organization in this respect was the *Dobrudzhanska revolyutsionna organizatsia* (Dobrudja Revolutionary Organization), established in 1925 in Vienna by the Comintern.[307]

Under the new international order established by the Paris Peace Treaties, Bulgaria did not have much room to openly demand a rectification of the Romanian-Bulgarian border in Dobrudja. Thus at the interstate level, its diplomatic efforts focused on providing political protection to the Bulgarian minority in Romania. Bulgarian authorities closely monitored Romania's actions in Southern Dobrudja and filed numerous complaints with the League of Nations over minority rights.[308] The sharpest confrontation between Romania and Bulgaria took place in the arena of public diplomacy, as the two countries engaged in a progaganda war over Dobrudja. The complex and arduous diplomatic confrontation between the two countries over Dobrudja at the Paris Peace Conference made politicians and scholars in the two countries realize, yet again, the paramount role public diplomacy could play in the two countries' multifaceted efforts to secure international support for their national goals. As Constantin Moisil, a leader of the Romanian public diplomacy campaign on Dobrudja, argued in 1919 in *Arhiva Dobrogei*:

> Together with our brave soldiers . . . our scholars, armed with the weapons of science, had to reject, one by one, the perfidious insinuations of the Bulgarian scholars, who were seeking to mislead European public

306 For a recent artistic representation of the upheaval created by the *comitagii* in Southern Dobrudja from the perspective of a Romanian border post, see the movie *Un été inoubliable*, directed by Lucian Pintilie (1994).

307 On the activity of this organization, see Dan Cătănus, *Cadrilaterul. Ideologie cominternistă si iredentism bulgar, 1919–1940* (Bucharest: Institutul National pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2001); Marin C. Stănescu, *Moscova, Cominternul, filiera comunistă balcanică si România (1919–1943)* (Bucharest: Silex, 1994). For a short presentation, see also *Almanah na balgarskite natsionalni dvizheniya sled 1878 g.*, 143.

308 For a sample of the debates on minority rights and Romania's policy in Southern Dobrudja, see *La tragédie de Staro Sélo (6 juillet 1926): sur le régime de la minorité bulgare dans la Dobroudja du sud, sous la domination roumaine* (Sofia: Impr. P. Glouchcoff, 1926).

> opinion. And the scholars' merit is no less important than that of the soldiers. Only through their common effort and sacrifices could we convince the world of the justice of our cause and could we regain that part of our country located across the Danube.[309]

Political elites in both countries learned from their war experience that, to prevail in territorial conflicts, military efforts were not enough. It was also crucial to accumulate expertise and documentary evidence that could be mobilized in critical times for diplomatic purposes. To this end, both sides took steps to create permanent study groups on the history of Dobrudja, tasked with further asserting their country's historical rights to the province, promoting the cause of Dobrudja in the national ideology of the respective country, and enabling politicians to successfully present their case in future diplomatic confrontations over the province. In Romania, the magazine *Arhiva Dobrogei* was relaunched in 1920 at Constanța, with the new name *Analele Dobrogei*, under the leadership of Constantin Brătescu and with the participation of the most important experts on the province.[310] On the Bulgarian side, following in the footsteps of the newspaper *Le mouvement dobroudjain*, published during the war by the Dobrudjan Organization in Bulgaria, new newspapers were founded in the interwar period, such as *Dobrudžansko zname* (1920–1921), *Dobrudža* (1923–1935), and *Rodna Dobrudža* (1936–1937). In addition, in 1932 the *Dobrudzhanski Nauchen Institut* (Dobrudja Scientific Institute) was established in Sofia. The institute was led by Mihail Arnaudov (president), Giorgi Genov (vice-president), and Stoyan Romanski (secretary). It grouped major scholars specializing in the study of Dobrudja, such as Nikola Mavrodinov, Petăr Gabe, Stiliyan Chilingirov, Petăr Mutafchiev, and Milan D. Markov.[311] The main task of the Institute was to convince European public opinion to back Bulgaria's cause in Dobrudja.[312]

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309 Constantin Moisil, *Arhiva Dobrogei. Revista Societății pentru cercetarea și studierea Dobrogei. Publicată sub auspiciile casei școalelor, și sub ingrijirea d-lui Const. Moisil*, vol. 2 (Bucharest: Tipografia Jockey Club, 1919), 153.

310 *Analele Dobrogei*'s editorial headquarters moved several times: it was published in Constanţa (1920–1923), Cernăuţi (1924–1927, 1929–1938), and Bucharest (1928). The magazine was relaunched in 1995 by the National Museum of History and Archeology, Constanţa, seventy-five years after it was first published.

311 The founding members included Dimitar Strashimirov, Yordan Yovkov, Prof. Dr. Borislav Yotsov, Dobri Nemirov, Prof. Dr. Petar Nikolov, and Anton Strashimirov.

312 For details, see *Almanah na bylgarskite nacionalni dvizhenia sled 1878–g*, eds. Markov, Grebenarov, Milachkov, and Stoianov, 147.

In September 1940, the Romanian-Bulgarian conflict over Dobrudja ended with a forced yet long-lasting entente, forged under the Nazi *Neuordnung Europas* and with the tacit approval of the Soviet Union. Defeated in World War I, Russia and Germany had been unable to shape the postwar territorial status quo in the Balkans, but in the late 1930s they vigorously re-emerged as prime actors in the region and even coordinated their expansion following the 1939 bilateral Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. In this context, under pressure from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy—which also led to the Second Vienna Award (August 30, 1940) that granted Northwestern Transylvania to Hungary—Romania agreed to cede Southern Dobrudja to Bulgaria, as a concession to stabilize its border. In turn, Bulgaria accepted Southern Dobrudja as a concrete national gain, while continuing to push for a—less certain—territorial compensation in Macedonia. Under the terms of the Treaty of Craiova signed on September 7, 1940, the two countries also agreed to a massive population exchange in order to create a stable ethnic border between Northern and Southern Dobrudja and to eliminate minority issues in their interstate relations.[313] As a result, about 110,000 Romanians from Southern Dobrudja and 65,000 Bulgarians from Northern Dobrudja were forcibly relocated to the respective "mother country." The porous imperial zones of coexistence and exchange were thus finally discontinued, and not only a stable state border but also a clear ethnic boundary was established between Romania and Bulgaria in Dobrudja.

In the short term, this territorial retrocession and the accompanying population exchange did not improve Romanian-Bulgarian relations, which were still marred by conflicts over the technical implementation of the 1940 treaty and by the legacy of hostile relations.[314] Instead, the diplomats of both coun-

313 *Tratat între România şi Bulgaria semnat la Craiova: 7 Septemvrie 1940* (Bucharest: Monitorul Oficial şi Imprimeriile Statului. Imprimeria Centrală, 1940).

314 See Maria Costea, "Aplicarea tratatului româno-bulgar de la Craiova (1940)," *Anuarul Institutului de Cercetări Socio Umane "Gheorghe Şincai" al Academiei Române* 12 (2009): 267–275. On the diplomatic relations between Romania and Bulgaria in the late 1930s and the 1940s, see Maria Costea, *România şi Bulgaria—Diplomaţie şi Conflict: Negocierile Româno-Bulgare privind problemele litigioase în perioada noiembrie 1933—martie 1940, reflectate în documentele diplomatice româneşti* (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Napoca Star, 2004); Florin Anghel, Mariana Cojoc, and Magdalena Tită, eds., *Romani si bulgari. Provocările unei vecinătăti* (Bucharest: Cartea Universitară, 2007); and Aurel Preda-Mătăsaru, *Tratatul intre Romania si Bulgaria semnat la Craiova, la 7 septembrie 1940. Trecut si prezent* (Bucharest: Lumina Lex, 2004). On the Bulgarian side, see Dimităr Sirkov, *Vănsnata politika na Bălgaria, 1938–1941* (Sofia: Izdatelstvo Nauka i Izkustvo, 1979); Antonina Kuzmanova, *Balkanskata politika na Rumănia, 1933–1939* (Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Bălgarskata Akademia na Naukite, 1984); Blagovest Njagulov, "La question de Dobroudja," *Etudes Balkaniques* no. 4 (1989), 21–40;

tries were preoccupied with preparing their representation at the forthcoming peace conference. To this end, they mobilized many experts, just as they did during and after World War I. However, if previously the propaganda mainly emphasized history and geography, in the late 1930s public diplomatic discourses were dominated by the emerging discipline of geopolitics. Authorities in Romania and Bulgaria set up geopolitical research groups to develop new geopolitical visions for their country, responding to the new opportunities and challenges created by the Nazi hegemony in Europe.

The emerging geopolitical schools in both countries were predominantly influenced by German geopolitics. Grouped mainly around the journal *Zeitschrit fur Geopolitik*, founded in 1924, the German geopolitical school evolved in the 1930s in close association with the consolidation of the Nazi regime,[315] contributing to the elaboration of the key ideological concepts, most notably that of *Lebensraum*, a term originally coined by Friedrich Ratzel's human geography and further elaborated, from a racial perspective, by Johan Rudolf Kjellén[316] and Karl Haushofer.[317] In Romania and Bulgaria, geopolitics assumed, first and foremost, a national character. While trying to adjust to the Great Powers' larger geopolitical visions for the Balkans, both schools nevertheless focused on the concept of historical rights to their national territory, the unification of their respective land and people, and the redefinition of the strategic place of Romania and Bulgaria in the European geopolitical landscape.

In Bulgaria, geopolitics developed in close association with geography, a discipline that had long been connected with diplomatic developments. It is telling that the Bulgarian Geographic Society was founded on November 9, 1918, two days before the end of World War I, under the chairmanship of Anastas

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and Nikolai Ghencev, *Vănsnata politika na Bălgaria, 1938–1941* (Sofia: Izdatelstvo Vektor, 1998).

315 For an overview of geopolitics, with an emphasis on Nazi Germany, see Johannes Mattern, *Geopolitik: Doctrine of National Self-Sufficiency and Empire* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1942).

316 See Rudolf Kjellén, *Der staat als Lebensform* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1917). On the work of the Swedish political scientist and his influence in Nazi Germany, see Ola Tunander, "Swedish-German Geopolitics for a New Century: Rudolf Kjellén's 'The State as a Living Organism,'" *Review of International Studies* 27 (2001): 451–463.

317 See Karl Haushofer, *Geopolitik des Pazifischen Ozeans* (Berlin and Grunewald: V. Winckel, 1924), published in English as Karl Haushofer, *An English Translation and Analysis of Major General Karl Ernst Haushofer's* Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean: *Studies in the Relationship Between Geography and History* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002). On Haushofer's impact on the Nazi ideology, see Holger H. Herwig, *The Demon of Geopolitics: How Karl Haushofer "Educated" Hitler and Hess* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016).

Ishirkov. In the 1930s, geographical studies in Bulgaria evolved in the direction of geopolitics, mostly under the influence of Ivan Atanasov Batakliev (1891–1973), "the father of Bulgarian geopolitical science,"[318] who succeeded Ishirkov as chair of the Department of General Geography at the University of Sofia, and as chair of the Bulgarian Geographic Society (1934–1945). As one analyst noted, in Batakliev's view geopolitics was "a method for applying political geography to the life of states," and thus it was simultaneously "a scientific theory and a real existing political practice of justifying state or coalition interests."[319] In the 1940s, Batakliev and his circle of collaborators worked closely with the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; authored works on the unique geopolitical position of Bulgaria as a "country of transit";[320] and provided expert reports on Bulgaria's historical rights that were to be amply used by the Bulgarian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference.

Dobrudja was an integral part of these geopolitical discourses on the Bulgarian lands. Bulgarian politicians celebrated the return of Southern Dobrudja in 1940 in a triumphalist manner, as a major foreign policy achievement.[321] In the same vein, geopolitical analysts such as Batakliev saluted the peaceful return of Southern Dobrudja as an implicit recognition by Romania of the province's Bulgarian character. Batakliev also welcomed the exchange of population between the two countries, arguing that in this way the "newly liberated Bulgarian land" again became "purely Bulgarian" and that its geographical unity with Northern Bulgaria was thus fully restored.[322] Aware that the Treaty of Craiova had to be reconfirmed at the ensuing peace conference, Bulgarian authorities took measures to consolidate their claims on Dobrudja. To this end, in October 1942, the Dobrudja Scientific Institute was reorganized and renamed the *Dobrudzhanski kulturen institute* (Dobrudja

318 The editors of *Geopolitika* 4 (2006), http://geopolitica.eu/2006/broi42006/536-geografskoto-edinstvo-na-balgarskite-zemi-, 11.

319 Marin Roussev, "Politicheska geografia i geopolitikata—kratak ocherk," *Politicheska Geografia i Geopolitika v Original* 2 (2009): 16.

320 Ivan Atanasov Batakliev, "Geografskoto edinstvo na bălgarskite zemi," *Izvestija na bălgarskoto geografsko druzhestvo*, kn. 9, 1941, 1942, reprinted in *Geopolitika* 4 (2006), http://geopolitica.eu/2006/broi42006/536-geografskoto-edinstvo-na-balgarskite-zemi-; "Obedinenieto na bălgarskija narod i politikogeografskoto mu polozhenie," *Izvestija na bălgarskoto geografsko druzhestvo* 8 (1941).

321 For the political speeches and festivities surrounding the event, see *Dobrudzha: Istor. zasedaniya na Nar. sabranie po prisaedinyavaneto na Yuzhna Dobrudzha kam maykata-otechestvo: 20 i 21 sept. 1940 g.* (Sofia: Darzh. pech., 1940).

322 Batakliev, "Geografskoto edinstvo na bălgarskite zemi," http://geopolitica.eu/2006/broi42006/536-geografskoto-edinstvo-na-balgarskite-zemi-, 11.

Cultural Institute). The new chairman of the Scientific Board of the Institute was Ivan Penakov, assisted by leading figures of the Bulgarian national movement in Dobrudja, such as A. Stoyanov, P. Gospodinov, A. Aydemirski, H. Kapitanov, L. Stanchev, D. Bozhinov, and B. Kodzhabashev. The new institute was to conduct an intense public diplomacy campaign aimed at instilling a sense of Bulgarian nationalism in Southern Dobrudja's population, as well as convincing European public opinion of Southern Dobrudja's Bulgarian character. To this end, the institute was to initiate research on the history, ethnography, folklore, geography, and cultural and economic life of Dobrudja; to create its own archive and museum on the history of the province; and to print works on "the Dobrudjan question" defending the Bulgarian point of view at home and abroad.[323]

In Romania, the loss of one-third of the country's territory in 1940 led to a wave of geopolitical studies designed to assist diplomatic efforts to restore its former borders. The Romanian geopolitical school emerged in the late 1930s, promoted mostly by sociologists but also by geographers grouped around the journal *Sociologie Românească*.[324] The first geopolitical discourses, published in the journal *Affaires Danubiennes*, focused on the key strategic role Romania was "predestined" to play in regional and continental affairs as a zone of transit between Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe and as a guarantor of security on the Lower Danube and the Black Sea. After the Second Vienna Award, the Romanian geopolitical school increasingly promoted "a geopolitics of the nation," evolving in close cooperation with the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[325] As the sociologist Traian Herseni defined it, the German word "*Geopolitik* means first of all politics—geographic politics, that is—in other words, politics in relation to the territory."[326] In the Romanian context, geopolitics was understood, first and foremost, as a discipline meant to *defend* the legitimate frontiers of the nation-state. The new orientation was best illustrated by the establishment of a new interdisciplinary journal called *Geopolitica şi geoistoria. Revistă română pentru sud-estul european* (Geopolitics and Geohistory: Romanian Review for Southeastern Europe, 1941–1944), edited by leading scientists from the fields of history (Gheorghe I. Brătianu),

323 For a brief presentation of the new institute, see *Almanah na balgarskite natsionalni dvizheniya sled 1878 g*., 146–147.

324 Dragoş Frăsineanu, *Geopolitica* (Bucharest: Editura Fundaţiei "România de Mâine," 2007), 54.

325 Diana Didă, "Orientări şi curente în geopolitica românească. Geopolitica, ştiinţa integralităţii teritoriale româneşti," *Etnosfera* 4 (2010), 32.

326 Cited in Didă, "Orientări şi curente în geopolitica românească," 32.

geography (Ion Conea), and sociology (Sabin Manuilă, Mircea Vulcănescu, and Anton Golopenţia).

These geopolitical discourses were closely related to the efforts of the Antonescu regime to prepare Romania's diplomatic representation at the forthcoming peace conference. First, Antonescu initiated an active campaign of public diplomacy, meant to convince the Great Powers, both allied and enemy, of Romania's historical rights to its lost territories, and to counter the hostile propaganda of rival countries, most notably of Hungary. A major outcome of this campaign was the 1942 publication of a historical atlas called *Spaţiul istoric şi etnic românesc* (The Romanian Historical and Ethnic Space). The atlas provided a comprehensive synthesis of Romania's historical and ethnic rights to its territory, arguing that there was a historical symbiosis between the Romanian people and its land.[327] Second, in order to coordinate these propaganda efforts with foreign policy actions, in June 1942, Ion Antonescu established a special division within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs called *Biroul Pacii* (Peace Bureau), which was active until the fall of the regime in late August 1944.[328] Organized in four major sections (historical, ethnic, biological, and statistical), the Bureau grouped major historians,

327 *Spaţiul istoric şi etnic românesc* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Naţională, 1942). A new edition of the atlas was published fifty years later as *Spaţiul istoric şi etnic românesc* by Mircea Cociu (maps by Lucian Petre), vol. 1: *Spaţiulu istoric românesc*, and vol. 2: Ungaria milenară (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1992–1993; Iași: Tipo Moldova, 2011). For an earlier geopolitical vision of the Romanian lands, see Romulus Seișanu, *La Roumanie: La terre roumaine à travers les âges; Atlas historique, géopolitique, ethnographique et économique* (Bucharest: "Universul," 1936; in French, English, and Romanian). For Romulus Seișanu's view of international relations, see his work *Principiul Naționalităților: Originile, Evoluția Și Elementele Constitutive Ale Naționalității: Tratatele De Pace Dela Versailles, Saint-Germain, Trianon, Neuilly-Sur-Seine, Sèvres, Lausanne: Studiu Istoric și de Drept Internațional Public* (Bucharest: Tipografia Ziarului "Universul," 1935).

328 Ion Ardeleanu, "'Biroul Păcii': Proiecte privind soluţionarea problemei frontierelor României şi bune relaţii în Balcani (1942–1943)," *Europa XXI* (Iaşi), vols. 1–2 (1992–1993): 128–132; Mioara Anton, "Biroul Păcii şi propaganda în interes naţional," *Dosarele Istoriei* 10 (2005) 12: 24–29; Petre Otu, ed., *Pacea de mâine. Documente ale Comisiei constituite în vederea pregătirii Conferinţei de Pace după cel de-al doilea război mondial* (*1942–1944*) (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 2006); Gheorghe Buzatu, "Drepturile şi interesele României în perspectiva reglementărilor postbelice: 'Biroul Păcii' (1942–1944)," in *România în ecuația războiului și păcii* (*1939–1947*), 2nd ed., ed. Gh. Buzatu (Bucharest: Mica Valahie, 2009), 24–65. On Mihai Antonescu's view of the relationship between public diplomacy and peacemaking, see his speech *Dacă vrei să câştigi războiul, trebuie să pregăteşti pacea: discurs ţinut la 16 iunie 1942, pentru constituirea Biroului Păcii* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Muzeului Etnografic al Transilvaniei, 1991).

ethnographers, geographers, and sociologists in a collaborative effort to convince public opinion at home and abroad of Romania's historical rights. The question of Dobrudja was an integral part of the agenda of the Peace Bureau.[329] However, the Antonescu regime did not launch an open irredentist campaign against Bulgaria, as it was engaged in a demanding war against the Soviet Union over the liberation of Bessarabia, and was keen to recover Northern Transylvania from Hungary. Instead, Antonescu was interested in further pacifying and thus neutralizing Bulgaria, also at the express recommendation of Nazi Germany, which wanted the normalization of bilateral relations among its allies.[330] To this end, in 1943 Antonescu created within the Peace Bureau a commission for negotiations with Bulgaria, but it did not lead to a major breakthrough in bilateral relations.[331]

The postwar Paris Peace Conference, which took place in July–October 1946, gave Romanian diplomats an opportunity to demand a reconsideration of the issue of Southern Dobrudja. Although the removal of the Antonescu regime brought the activity of the Peace Bureau to an end, the expert documentation it accumulated influenced Romania's diplomatic representation at the Conference. Prominent Romanian diplomats argued that the cancellation of the 1940 Second Vienna Award and the resulting retrocession of Northwestern Transylvania to Romania necessarily had to lead to the de jure cancellation of the Treaty of Craiova between Romania and Bulgaria as well, since both acts were the result of a Nazi dictate. Under the joint influence of Soviet and U.S. diplomacy, the Peace Congress nevertheless opted to maintain the status quo

329 For earlier works on Dobrudja, see Romulus Seişanu, *Dobrogea: Gurile Dunării şi Insula Şerpilor: schiţa moniografică, studii şi documente*. 1928; and the massive books *Dobrogea* (Bucharest: Cultura Natională, 1928) and *La Dobroudja* (Bucharest: Monitorul oficial şi Imprimerile statului, Imprimeria natională, 1938), marking the achievements of fifty and sixty years of Romanian rule in the province, respectively. For another, more synthetic work on Dobrudja, translated into several major languages, see Radu Vulpe, *The Dobruja through the Centuries: Its Historical Evolution and Geopolitical Aspects* (Bucharest: Dacia, 1939); *La Dobroudja à travers les siècles; évolution historique et considérations géopolitiques* (Bucharest: Éditions "Dacia," 1939); *Die Dobrudscha im Laufe der Jahrhunderte, geschichtliche Entwicklung und geopolitische Betrachtungen* (Bucharest: "Dacia"-Verlag, 1939); *La Dobrugia attraverso i secoli: evoluzione storica e considerazioni geopolitiche* (Bucharest: Dacia, 1939).

330 Thus on June 17, 1942, the German Foreign Office urged the Romanian minister in Berlin, Raoul Bossy, to resume negotiations with Bulgaria on the last pending issues over the implementation of the Treaty of Craiova. See Petre Otu, ed., *Pacea de mâine*, 26, citing Buzatu, "Drepturile şi interesele României," 36.

331 Buzatu, "Drepturile şi interesele României," 27.

in Dobrudja, on the grounds that the new settlement actually reconfirmed the Romanian-Bulgarian border set at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. The 1940 Nazi arbitration on Southern Dobrudja thus became the only territorial change imposed under the Nazi *Neuordnung Europas* to endure after World War II. By the same token, Bulgaria became the only ally of the Axis Powers that managed to retain a territory it annexed during World War II.

Conclusion

In a book on the role of territory in constructing group identity in Southeastern Europe, George W. White identified a hierarchical division among core, semi-peripheral, and peripheral areas in the national ideology of Serbs, Romanians, and Hungarians.[332] White established this hierarchy according to the "tenacity factor"—the intensity and determination with which these nations were willing to fight over various regions.[333] According to White's typology, Dobrudja figured rather marginally in the Romanian national ideology. The province was symbolically divided between the semi-core regions of Central and Northern Dobrudja and the peripheral region of Southern Dobrudja, a division that corresponded to the ethnic configuration and the political history of the province. Inhabited mainly by Turks, Tartars, and Bulgarians, Southern Dobrudja was annexed by Romania in 1913 from Bulgaria mainly for geopolitical reasons, a fact that accounts for the province's peripheral place in the Romanian national imaginary. In turn, the semi-peripheral region of Northern Dobrudja had many historical ties to Romania and was inhabited by a sizable Romanian population. The Romanians' strong emotional bonds to the province and the role assigned to it in the national economy explain the determination with which Romania fought Bulgaria over Dobrudja in World War I. Among semi-peripheral regions, Northern Dobrudja was nevertheless considered secondary. More important was Bessarabia, a province that, according to White, "figures first [among the semi-core territories] in the struggle to create a Romanian nation-state."[334]

White's book has the merit of underscoring the important role played by the idea of national territory in the process of nation- and state-building in

332 See George W. White, *Nationalism and Territory: Constructing Group Identity in Southeastern Europe* (Lanham, MD; Boulder, CO; New York; and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).

333 Ibid., 639–640.

334 Ibid., 165.

East Central and Southeastern Europe. However, he writes solely from the perspective of the nation-building center, and his largely static and ahistorical approach does not account for changes and variations in the role and importance assigned to various territories and historical provinces in the national ideologies developed in the Balkans, as a function of wider demographic, economic, or political developments. Building critically on White's approach, this paper has explored the shifting place of Northern and Southern Dobrudja in the Romanian and Bulgarian national ideologies, with an emphasis on mutual cross-references and entanglements between the two sides within the larger geopolitical context. My analysis highlighted the geopolitical construction of Dobrudja as a historical region, the symbolic substitution between Dobrudja and Southern Bessarabia in the Romanian national ideology, and the multiple links between Dobrudja and Macedonia in the Bulgarian national imaginary. In the Bulgarian national ideology (which White's book does not cover at all), I argue that the symbolic positions of Northern and Southern Dobrudja were reversed: Southern Dobrudja was almost unanimously regarded as a core province of modern Bulgaria, as an integral part of the autonomous Bulgarian state established in 1878. The province's importance in Bulgarian national ideology explains Bulgaria's great resentment over losing it in 1913 and its military retaliation in World War I that led to the conflict with Romania in 1916–1917. Northern Dobrudja, however, appears to be a semi-peripheral region in the Bulgarian national ideology, certainly secondary in importance to the core province of Macedonia but also ranked lower than Southern Dobrudja, which explains its de facto abandonment in 1940.

The territorial conflict between Romania and Bulgaria over Dobrudja led to harsh conflicts during the Balkan Wars and the Great War, and tense diplomatic relations during the interwar period. In both countries, the conflict was subsumed by other "core" national issues. In Romania, a great tension existed between the country's territorial aspirations in Central Europe and those in the Balkans. In Bulgaria, the Dobrudjan question was often in tension with the larger and more important Macedonian question. The multiple geopolitical entanglements between these territorial questions became amply evident during World War I: the conflict between Romania and Bulgaria over Dobrudja forced both countries to sustain a second military front, in addition to their main military operations in Transylvania and Macedonia, respectively. These supplementary efforts stretched their resources and manpower to the limit, gravely jeopardizing the achievement of their major national aspirations.

Military confrontations were accompanied by rival public diplomacy campaigns. The first systematic engagements with public diplomacy over Dobrudja in Romania and Bulgaria were initiated in 1912–1913, closely connected with

Romania's annexation of the Quadrilater. These rival propaganda campaigns peaked just before and during the peace negotiations leading up to the Treaty of Bucharest in May 1918 and the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine in November 1919. The propaganda war between Romania and Bulgaria intensified during the interwar period. As shown in the last section of this essay, in the 1930s, scholarly debates were increasingly couched in the political language of geopolitics, a newly emerging discipline that was particularly important in shaping the foreign policy of Nazi Germany.

In September 1940, the Romanian-Bulgarian conflict over Dobrudja ended with a forced yet long-lasting entente, forged under the Nazi *Neuordnung Europas* and with the tacit approval of the Soviet Union. The peaceful retrocession of Southern Dobrudja and the mandatory exchange of population between Romania and Bulgaria that took place in 1940 effectively ended the territorial conflict between the two countries. In addition, the establishment of socialist regimes in post-1945 Romania and Bulgaria and their forced integration into the Soviet bloc placed the two states' mutual relations on a new basis. Under *pax Sovietica*, interstate conflicts were artificially suppressed, cloaked under the official rhetoric of brotherhood and unity within the socialist camp—including in historiography.[335]

The outcome of the "Dobrudjan question" thus provides a rare example of a territorial conflict in the Balkans that was solved through negotiations, even if that involved painful compromises and losses on both sides.[336] Applying the

335 For the first work on this topic, see Petre P. Panaitescu, *Români şi bulgari* (Bucharest, 1944). For works on Romanian-Bulgarian relations published during the early communist period, stressing their "fraternal" cooperation against "exploitation," see, among others: Petre Constantinescu, *Rolul României în epoca de regenerare a Bulgariei* (Iaşi, 1919); Petre Constantinescu-Iaşi, *Raporturi culturale româno-bulgare* (Bucharest: Ministerul Informatiilor, 1946); Petre Constantinescu-Iași, *Hristo Botev în România* (Bucharest, 1947); Petre Constantinescu-Iași, *Despre român si bulgari. Contribuții istorice la prietenia româno-bulgară* (Bucharest: Editura de Stat, 1949); Petre Constantinescu-Iaşi, *Studii istorice româno-bulgare* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei R.P.R., 1956); Petre Constantinescu-Iaşi, *Din activitatea lui Hristo Botev şi a altor revoluţionari bulgari la Bucharest: comunicare prezentată în şedinţa din 2 mai 1950* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Române, 1950); Constantin Velichi, *La contribution de l'émigration bulgare de Valachie: à la renaissance politique et culturelle du peuple bulgare* (*1762–1850*) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1970); Constantin Velichi, *La Roumanie, et la mouvement révolutionnaire bulgare de libération nationale* (*1850–1878*) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1979).

336 Malomir Zaharieff and Georges Scelle, *Les minorités bulgares en Roumanie: conditions d'une entente bulgaro-roumaine* (Paris: Domat-Montchrestien, 1940).

painful lessons learned during World War I, political elites in Romania and Bulgaria opted for a peaceful, negotiated territorial compromise over a conflict in Dobrudja that could jeopardize, once again, the fulfillment of their "main" national objectives in Transylvania and Macedonia, respectively. Yet the de facto resolution of the Romanian-Bulgarian territorial conflict was not accompanied by a historical reconciliation between the two countries. Instead, it was forged through the external mediation of hegemonic powers and made possible by a mandatory population exchange leading to ethnic separation. This pattern of conflict resolution without reconciliation explains why, although the Romanian-Bulgarian interstate dispute has ended, irredentist suspicions and accusations persist. It is therefore no wonder that historiographic debates between Romanian and Bulgarian historians over Dobrudja continued (albeit less intensely) during the communist era, pervading the official discourse, and seem to have been revitalized after 1989 as well.[337] It is to be hoped that the new context generated by the two countries' EU accession in 2007—which also led to an unprecedented level of bilateral integration—will, in time, generate a more fruitful scholarly dialogue between Romania and Bulgaria, at various levels.

337 For recent polemics, see, on the Bulgarian side: Velizar Iv. Velkov, Velko Tonev, and Iordan Zarchev, *Kratka istoriia na Dobrudzha*, 1st ed. (Varna: G. Bakalov, 1986); Zheko Popov, *Bulgarite v Severna Dobrudzha: 1878–1913* (Sofia: Izdatelska Kushta "Ivan Vazov," 1991); Antonina Kuzmanova, "Le caractère bulgare de la Dobroudja en 1878–1949 vu par les roumains de l'époque. Propagande et prise en considération des réalités," *Etudes Balkaniques* (Sofia) 29, no. 3 (1993): 3–17; and *Bulgarskiiat natsionalen vupros v bulgaro-rumunskite otnosheniia 1878–1902 g.* (Sofia: IK Mediakom, 1994). On the Romanian side, see Stoica Lascu, "Un net avantaj: bulgaristica circumstanţiată Dobrogei," *România de la Mare* 3, nos. 3–4 (1994): 59–68; and Adrian Rădulescu and Ion Bitoleanu, *Istoria Dobrogei*, 2nd ed. (Constanţa: Editura Ex Ponto, 1998), which devotes considerable space to countering the historical arguments of Bulgarian historians. For a recent review in Romanian of Bulgarian works on Dobrudja, see Constantin Iordan, *Dobrogea (1878–1940) în istoriografia bulgară postcomunistă* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2013). For recent foreign treatments of the Dobrudjan question in the interwar period, see Alberto Basciani, *Un conflitto balcanico: a contesa fra Bulgaria e Romania in Dobrugia del Sud, 1918–1940* (Cosenza: Periferia, 2001). For a comparison with the Banat, see Andrea Rosler, *Rumanien nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg: die Grenzziehung in der Dobrudscha und im Banat und die Folgeprobleme* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1994).

CHAPTER 6

The Search for National Architectural Styles in Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria from the Mid-nineteenth Century to World War I

Ada Hajdu

Introduction

In the nineteenth century, architectural history increasingly focused on identifying distinctive national traits in the architecture of the past, while architects concentrated more and more on inventing styles that would represent their nations. These national styles were supposed to materialize national or supra-national ideologies, continuing in the present what was conceptualized as an architectural tradition of the past, and expressing a nation's distinctiveness in the same way that traditional architecture was believed to have done in the past. Viennese architects created an Orientalizing architectural style that they believed conveyed the distinctiveness of Bosnia.[1] Hungarian architects proposed a national style that, on occasion, was also Orientalizing.[2] In the Ottoman Empire, foreign architects working with local intellectuals conceived an architectural order that organized sixteenth-century Ottoman architecture in the same way that classical orders organized ancient Greek architecture, and proposed that it be used in order to invent a national style.[3] In imperial

1 Maximilian Hartmuth, "Insufficiently Oriental? An Early Episode in the Study and Preservation of the Ottoman Architectural Heritage in the Balkans," in *Monuments, Patrons, Contexts: Papers on Ottoman Europe Presented to Machiel Kiel*, eds. Maximilian Hartmuth and Ayşe Dilsiz (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2010), 171–184; Aida Lipa, "The Austro-Hungarian Period in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Cultural Politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Creation of the Western Type of Art," *Kakanien Revisited* 5 (2006): 1–14.

2 János Gerle, "Hungarian Architecture from 1900 to 1918," in *The Architecture of Historic Hungary*, eds. Dora Wiebenson and József Sisa (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998) pp. 223–244; Katalin Sinkó, "The Creation of a National Style of Ornamentation at the End of the Nineteenth Century," *Multiple Antiquities—Multiple Modernities*, eds. Gábor Klaniczay, Michael Werner, and Ottó Gecser (Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 2011), 45–53.

3 Gülrü Necipoğlu, "Creation of a National Genius: Sinan and the Historiography of 'Classical' Ottoman Architecture," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 141–184; Selim Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1808 to 1908," *Comparative Studies in*

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Russia, neo-Byzantine styles were involved in supporting pan-Slavic ideologies as well as in affirming national identity.[4] In Greece, both a neoclassical and a neo-Byzantine style were instrumentalized as national.[5]

The national architectural styles developed in the second half of the nineteenth century in Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia have often been associated with the Byzantine heritage in these countries, both by their creators and by observers. Even though the eclecticism of the nineteenth century opened architectural history to the conceptualization and use of more styles from the past (in addition to the styles of the ancient era), architects' choices in inventing national styles were still limited. Usually the most valuable past was "medieval times," and "medieval architecture" meant Romanesque and Gothic for Western countries and Byzantine for Eastern Europe. When put into practice, however, this simplistic scheme proved unsatisfactory, especially because "national" should have been related not only to the country's history but also to its geography. Thus, placing a certain country within a Romanesque/Gothic or a Byzantine tradition was a process in constant revision. Rationalizing the past and its architecture presumed the identification of some "objective" (most often, formal) general characteristics—otherwise the architectural production of the past could not have been conceptualized as a "style." For the Balkan countries, "rationalization" most often amounted to "nationalization." It consisted of "discovering" and selecting relevant "authentic" architectural vestiges; of identifying formal variants and invariants and molding them into rational schemes of "development" in time and space; of establishing distinctive features and carving them out of the more encompassing "(post)-Byzantine style" they were supposed to belong to; and of mapping "influences" and establishing centers and peripheries that, at the same time, would define what was "local tradition" and what came from "outside." All these proved to be complex

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Society and History 35 (1993): 3–29; Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2001), 16–55.

4 In Russia there was a national style inspired from Russian art and a neo-Byzantine style inspired from the medieval architecture in Georgia and Armenia. M.S. Strogalev, "Pamyatniki russkoy 'vizantiyskoy' arhitekturyi v Moskve (konets XIX–nachalo XX veka)," *Vestnik slavyanskih kul'tur* 3 (2009): 97–106; Irina Shevelenko, "Empire and Nation in the Imagination of Russian Modernism," *Ab Imperio* 3 (2009): 171–206; George L. Kline, "Religion, National Character and the 'Rediscovery of Russian Roots,'" *Slavic Review* 32 (1973): 29–40.

5 Eleni Bastea, *The Creation of Modern Athens: Planning the Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Vassilis Colonas, "La cathédrale d'Athènes et la naissance du style 'gréco-byzantin,'" in *L'architecture religieuse au XIX^e siecle*, eds. Bruno Foucart and Françoise Hamon (Paris: PUPS, 2006), 69–82.

enterprises that could only be achieved at the expense of "real" architecture. Whole historical periods or construction categories were set aside as "not distinctive," while in the process of establishing an architectural canon complexities were erased in order to emphasize similarities within a territory and differences from neighboring areas. These processes were connected to more general attempts at nationalizing the past and to their immediate political contexts. However, they were not a mere "reflection" of national histories, as at times they contradicted general trends in national historiographies or political projects, and proposed alternative (though also "failed") interpretations of the past.

The issue is not whether distinctiveness in architecture existed or needed to be invented—whether a tradition was based on real precedents or was fabricated. Regarding the Byzantine style, a rigorous definition did not exist and is probably impossible to produce; nevertheless, it can be fruitful to investigate the historicity of this production. It is not that medieval and early modern vestiges did not exist or that they did not have different characteristics from one region to the other, or that within one region it was not possible to identify similarities among these vestiges. The issue is that the historicity of conceptualizing these differences and similarities shows the difficulties in dealing with a complex reality without simplifying and essentializing it along nationalist lines.

Architecture in the Balkans before National Styles

In the first half of the nineteenth century, building practices throughout the Balkans were rather homogeneous. The residential architecture of many towns and villages in the Balkans and Anatolia looked similar, as foreign travelers frequently noted. Of course, there were regional differences, but these do not seem to map with ethnicities or with any subsequent political boundaries.[6]

The locals do not seem to have invested residential architecture with any kind of ethnic or religious identity. It is difficult to determine how it was regarded, because it does not seem to have been conceptualized, and there are few sources dealing with architecture. Travel literature produced by locals rarely mentioned buildings, and these mentions were not descriptive. For example, when traveling through Bulgaria on his way to Istanbul in 1857, Dimitrie Bolintineanu described Ruschuk (now Ruse) as having "small

6 See Tchavdar Marinov's chapter in this volume.

and irregular houses [...]. Narrow and dirty streets."[7] Subsequent generations would commonly regard Ottoman residential houses as "irregular" and the streets of Ottoman towns as "narrow and dirty," but Bolintineanu seemed to apply the description not to Ottoman towns in general but only where he found them neglected. Bolintineanu considered Bulgarian towns and villages to be better kept than the Turkish ones, but he did not say that they looked different or that Christian houses were distinct from Muslim ones. It seems that the quality of construction was of interest, not the appearance. A building seemed proper when it was large and built of high-quality materials, and a town was nice when it was clean and lit at night. The same criteria applied to judging architecture in other areas, too, for example, in the Ottoman Empire or in Central and Western Europe.[8] Travelers did not find anything "typical"; if there were any dividing lines, they were between rich and poor, clean and dirty, regulated and unregulated, and big and small. And these lines applied for both the East and the West, for both the architecture they should have been familiar with from home and the architecture they could have found different from home. For them, describing architecture was not an ethnographic tool. It could be argued that these travelers (otherwise well educated and showing interest in how people spoke, dressed, or behaved) were not especially interested in architecture, or that they lacked the knowledge and the vocabulary needed for describing architecture (even though they were able to accurately describe ancient ruins or Western medieval and Renaissance architecture). However, intellectuals with formal training had similar approaches.[9] The fact that residential architecture was not connected to ethnic or religious identity is also demonstrated by some authors' descriptions of their own people's architecture. In the detailed monographs written by amateur Bulgarian geographers between 1846 and 1876, even if architecture was often described, residential buildings were not associated with ethnicity or religion. No distinctions were made between houses inhabited by Christians or Muslims, or Greeks or Bulgarians.[10]

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7 Dimitrie Bolintineanu, *Călătorii pe Dunăre şi în Bulgaria* (Bucharest: Tipografia Iosif Romanov, 1858), 39.

8 See, for example, Nicolae Suţu, *Amintiri de călătorie. 1839–1847* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2000); or Theodor Constantinescu, *O câlâtorie la Constantinopoli* (Iaşi: Tipografia Foaiei Săteşti, 1844).

9 Ion Ionescu de la Brad, *Excursion agricole dans la plaine de Dobrudja* (Constantinople: Journal de Constantinople, 1851).

10 For example, Stefan Zahariev, *Geografiko-istoriko-statistichesko opisanie na Tatar-Pazardzhishkata kaaza* (Vienna: L. Sommer & Cie., 1870), or Lyuben Karavelov, *Zapiski za Bălgariya i za bălgarite* (Sofia: Knigoizdatelstvo Ignatov, 1940 [1867–1868]). For the

The same indifference towards connecting residential architecture with ethnic or national identity existed in building practices. A telling example was the architectural work of Miloš Obrenović. He built a new Baroque metropolitan church and other public buildings in Belgrade in neoclassical style, but for his residence and that of his wife, Ljubica, he built two *konak*s.[11] On the territories that were part of the Ottoman Empire, when the Tanzimat decided to establish Western-type institutions, they were often placed inside existing *konak*s, while new buildings in Western European styles coexisted with building new *konak*s, even for architectural programs with a high degree of representation, such as schools.[12] It seems that new architecture was not necessarily expected to look any specific way, while older architecture did not bear the hallmarks of any particular population.

The explicit intention to invent a national style seems to have appeared with the first generations of Romanian, Serbian, and Bulgarian architects and art historians trained abroad. But before the question of national architectural styles was explicitly raised by trained specialists, there was a certain level of interest in imposing distinctiveness with regard to religious architecture. In the 1820s and 1830s, intellectuals traveled through their countries primarily to search for coins, inscriptions, and documents regarding their medieval rulers. Architectural vestiges were rarely considered relevant for the emerging

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amateur geographers, see Desislava Lilova, "Balkanite kato rodina? Versii za teritorialnata identichnost na bălgarite pod osmanska vlast," in *Krayat na modernostta*, eds. Georgi Tchobanov and Albena Vacheva (Sofia: Litnet, 2003), 27–62. For an analysis of the images of settlements in nineteenth-century literature, see Alexander Kiossev, "Plovdiv: The Text of the City vs. the Texts of Literature," in *History of the Literary Cultures in East-Central Europe*, vol. 2, ed. Marcel Cornis-Pope (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2006), 124–144.

11 *Konak*s were small palaces or large villas isolated in the middle of a building lot and used as private residences or with official functions. Divna Đurić-Zamolo, *Graditelji Beograda 1815–1914* (Belgrade: Muzej grada Beograda, 1981), 114–116; Jelena Bogdanović, "On the Architecture of *Konaks* in Serbia (1804–1830s)," *Serbian Studies* 21 (2007): 161–180.

12 Between 1882 and 1892, as part of a project of modernizing public education, thirty civil schools were built in the Ottoman Empire, many of them in the Balkans (for example, in Ianina, Izmir, Trabzon, Skopje, Prishtine, Komotini, Kastamoni, Salonic, and Bitola). The architecture of these schools was extensively used to illustrate "advancements" in both education and town planning, such as in the photographic albums Abdul Hamid II sent to the Library of Congress and to the British Museum in 1893. See Carney E.S. Gavin, ed., *Imperial Self-Portrait: The Ottoman Empire as Revealed in the Sultan Abdul Hamid II's Photographic Albums Presented as Gifts to the Library of Congress (1893) and the British Museum (1894)*, special issue of *Journal of Turkish Studies* 12 (1988).

national histories.[13] Janko Šafarik was appointed by the Serbian Ministry of Education to conduct a field trip in 1846 in order to identify and record valuable vestiges.[14] His report, illustrated with drawings, included a few medieval churches, but they were valued instead for the mural paintings they contained depicting the faces of medieval rulers, the burial places inside them, or the manuscripts in their libraries. However, describing Manasija, Šafarik called it "the flower of Byzantine-Slavic building style [. . .], which all Orthodox Serbs, or the Slavs in general, should take as an example or as a model. Therefore, when they build their churches and monasteries, the Serbs should take the plans from Manasija, Žiča, and Ravanica."[15] Even though his report was not published, his recommendation was known in intellectual circles and was followed: in 1862 it was decreed that new churches should be built in a "Byzantine style."[16] In 1855, Andreja Damjanov, a master builder from what is now Macedonia who built many churches throughout the Balkans, was asked by the parish priests in Smederevo to build a new church using the church in Manasija as a model.[17] The reference to a medieval church was intended to express not ethnic but religious identity, as the style of the church was supposed to indicate not Serbian-ness but Orthodoxy, in a context where most new churches in Serbia had adopted the Baroque style of Orthodox churches

13 For Serbia, see Vuk Karadžić's study, "Početak opisanija srpski manastira," *Danica* 1 (1826): 1–40; and Joakim Vujić, *Putešestvije po Serbiji* (Buda: Pečatnja Kraljevskog sveučilišta Peštanskoga, 1828).

14 Janko Šafarik, the nephew of Pavel Josef Šafarik, visited Šabac, Obrenovac, Valjevo, Loznica, Čačak, Karanovac, Kraljevo, Studenica, Ljubostinje, Kruševac, Ravanica, Manasija, Požarevac, and Smederevo. A few years later, he became the first director of the National Museum in Belgrade. In the same report, he called the buildings he visited "beautiful ruins built in the Byzantine construction manner" (referring to the alternation of stones and bricks) and suggested that the votive paintings be copied and placed in the National Museum to remind visitors of their "glorious ancestors." He made drawings of Žiča, Kruševac, Ravanica, and Manasija, classifying Kruševac as Byzantine.

15 Janko Šafarik, *Izvjestije o putovanju po Serbiji 1846. godine* (Valjevo: Zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture "Valjevo," 1993), 23.

16 The decree was part of the new law regulating construction on the territory of Serbia. Dušica Živanović, "Počeci proučavanja vizantijske arhitekture u Srbiji," *Niš and Byzantium* 2 (2003): 393–403.

17 Between 1835 and 1878, Andreja Damjanov built churches in Skopje, Kratovo, Veles, Kriva Palanka, Novo Selo, Kumanovo, Gorno Čičevo, Pečenjevac, Turekovac, Niš, Sarajevo, and Mostar. See Jasmina Hadžieva-Aleksievska and Elizabeta Kasapova, *Arhitekt Andeja Damjanov 1813–1878* (Skopje, 2001).

built by the Slavs in the Habsburg Empire.[18] This probably explains why, when the question of a national style emerged in Serbia, Damjanov's experiment was ignored by the first generation of trained architects, who did not consider him a precursor; his work was reconsidered only later and from a Yugoslav perspective. However, in 1862, Damjanov's church in Smederevo was mentioned by William Denton as one of four churches in Serbia that were "pure examples of Servian church architecture."[19] Of these four examples of Serbian architecture, two were medieval and two had been recently built or rebuilt: Denton did not distinguish between old and new architecture in its capacity to be "Serbian," while the buildings he mentioned stood out from the other churches he saw because of their monumentality and quality of construction. Projecting a sense of continuity between old and new architecture, even if not explicit in Denton's text, would become a central issue in the conceptualization of the Serbian-Byzantine style, which would refer to both old and new architecture on the territory of medieval and nineteenth-century Serbia. Two decades later, Melchisedec, a Moldavian bishop traveling to Bulgaria, did not identify anything Bulgarian in the churches he visited.[20] Even though he was interested in heritage (he was the first to collect inscriptions from medieval Moldavian churches), he did not consider medieval religious architecture in Bulgaria to be part of a Byzantine tradition, and he judged churches the same way residential architecture was judged: in terms of their size and building materials, and with more appreciation for new architecture than for old. However, when traveling, both Denton and Melchisedec looked for important medieval vestiges in connection with their ktetors,[21] expecting that the churches and monasteries founded by important political figures from the Middle Ages would

18 For example, the Trinity Church in Kraljevo (1824–1830), Saints Peter and Paul in Šabac (1827–1830), or Saint George in Užice (1842–1844). Aleksandar Ignjatović, "Između žezla i ključa: nacionalni identitet i arhitektonsko nasleđe Beograda i Srbije u XIX i prvoj polovini XX veka," *Nasleđe* 8 (2008): 60.

19 The other "pure examples of Servian architecture" were Rakovica, Ravanica, and Manasija. William Denton, *Servia and the Servians* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), 156. The Rakovica monastery was believed to have been founded by Dragutin and Milutin; its church, dating from the sixteenth or seventeenth century, was heavily modified during the eighteenth century, and it had just been rebuilt by the Obrenović family a few years before Denton's visit. The Ravanica (1377) and Manasija (1410–1418) monasteries were founded by Prince Lazar and largely preserved their original architecture.

20 Sf. Sa Episcop Melchisedec, "O excursiune in Bulgaria," *Revista pentru istorie, arheologie şi filologie* 4 (1885): 501–532; and *Revista pentru istorie, arheologie şi filologie* 5 (1885): 113–123.

21 The ktetors were the benefactors who founded or embellished a church.

have survived and would be monumental, and, conversely, that monumental structures would have been founded by important political figures.

The interest in building churches in a suitable style, comparable to the initiative of the priests in Smederevo, was expressed in the projects of some foreign architects working in Wallachia. Johann Schlatter was an architect and restorer who designed the plans for a standard church to be used in Wallachian villages.[22] The standard church was in a neo-Romanesque style, and most likely Schlatter used it because his generation considered this the most suitable style for Orthodox churches.[23] The creators of the Romanian national style disregarded Schlatter's efforts, regarding him as one of the foreign architects who simply imposed fashionable Western styles and displaced local tradition. However, Schlatter's intentions might have been different. For his generation, the Romanesque and neo-Romanesque style occupied approximately the same conceptual space that Byzantine and neo-Byzantine architecture would occupy a few decades later. By contrast, there was not yet a local, Wallachian tradition to refer to, nor the theoretical possibility to include local architecture in a grand narrative that would make it suitable as a reference. In conclusion, the need to build religious architecture that would express not only Orthodoxy but also national identity, or to identify national identity in churches from the past, does not seem to have been explicitly conceptualized before the first generations of architects formally trained in Western art academies returned to Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria.

Neo-Byzantine

The literature on how Byzantine architecture became a subject of interest to art historians and architects, and on the invention of the "Byzantine style" (in connection with a short-lived "Romano-Byzantine style" and the "Romanesque style"), is quite recent and concerns mostly French and German art history of the second half of the nineteenth century.[24] The way in which these newly

22 Horia Radu Moldovan, "Construcţii 'model' la jumătatea secolului al XIX-lea în Ţara Românească. Studiu de caz—biserica arhitectului Johann Schlatter," *Monumentul* 7 (2012): 181–190.

23 The Romanesque style was believed to have originated in the Orient, and thus it was seen as suitable for things "Oriental," including Orthodox churches.

24 For the "prehistory" of the "Byzantine style" and its development in connection with the then-emerging "Romano-Byzantine" and "Romanesque," see Jean Nayrolles, *L'Invention de l'art roman à l'époque moderne* (*XVIII*[e]*-XIX*[e] *siècles*) (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de

"discovered" styles were taught in Western art academies, how this knowledge was translated and adapted in the countries where the Byzantine heritage existed, and the interdependencies between Western- and Eastern European scholarship on Byzantine architecture still need to be investigated. What this style's characteristics were—what caused a medieval church to be seen as "Byzantine," for example—was something yet to be decided. Furthermore, it was not clear if this style should be regarded as an "Oriental style" or a "European" one.[25]

The study of Byzantine architecture was prompted by architects' interest in the dome of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, not because it was considered an example of a certain "style" but because it was seen as a possible missing link between ancient and Renaissance domes.[26] Emphasis on domes remained one of the most enduring formal criteria for establishing the style of a church as Byzantine, while Hagia Sophia never ceased to be regarded as "the most accomplished" example of Byzantine architecture.[27] In fact, for a while Hagia Sophia was one of the very few known examples of Byzantine art, because Byzantine heritage in the rest of the Ottoman Empire, including the Balkans, had not been identified and researched, and the first wave of neo-Byzantine architecture from across Europe had Hagia Sophia as a starting point.[28] The invention of the "Byzantine style" in German and French art history both influenced and was influenced by the creation of various neo-Byzantine styles. The scholarly interest in Byzantine architecture as well as its suitability for the creation of a new style—whether national or not—had different meanings, depending on the context. In Prussia, Byzantium received special praise as the guardian of the "true" faith, closer to the origins of Christianity, and therefore neo-Byzantine churches were supposed to better express the relationship of

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Rennes, 2005). For the German "*Rundbogenstil*," which its theoreticians named either "*Byzantin*"—for example, Carl Alexander von Heideloff, *Der kleine Byzantiner* (Riegl und Weißner, 1857)—or "*Neuromanik*"—for example, Heinrich Hübsch, in the influential *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen* (Karlsruhe, 1828)—see Kathleen Curran, "The German Rundbogenstil and Reflections on the American Round-Arched Style," in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 47 (1988): 351–373.

25 Louis Bréhier, "Orient ou Byzance," *Revue archéologique* 10 (1907): 396–412; and Gabriel Millet, "Byzance et non l'Orient" (Paris: Leroux, 1908), 171–189.

26 Ludovic Bender, "Regards sur Sainte-Sophie (fin XII^{e}—début XIX^{e} siècle): prémisses d'une histoire de l'architecture byzantine," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 105 (2012): 1–28.

27 Silvia Foschi, "Santa Sofia di Constantinopoli: immagini dall'Occidente," *Annali di architettura* 14 (2002): 7–33.

28 Robert S. Nelson, *Hagia Sophia, 1850–1950: Holy Wisdom, Modern Monument* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

Lutheranism to the genuine early Church.[29] For Jewish communities, building a neo-Byzantine synagogue was a way of asserting their "Orientalness," differentiating them from the German milieu in which, at some point, they believed they had become excessively assimilated.[30] In Bavaria, Byzantium was ideologically attractive because it triggered imperial fantasies. The intimate connection between Byzantine architecture and the idea of empire was especially fruitful in the Balkan countries. Greek intellectuals appropriated Byzantium as Greek, and the presence of Byzantine monuments outside the political boundaries of Greece was an argument in support of the restoration of the Byzantine Empire in accordance with the Megali Idea.[31] The sustained interest in Byzantine monuments did not challenge the supremacy of neoclassicism in Greece, as the neo-Byzantine style was used mostly for churches,[32] but it encouraged the study of Byzantine vestiges, and this proved especially important in expanding the knowledge of Byzantine art in the Balkans.[33]

The most influential researcher and disseminator of Byzantine architecture in the Balkans was Theophil von Hansen, an architect active mostly in Vienna and Athens.[34] While working in Athens in the 1830s and 1840s, he became interested in Byzantine architecture, and after returning to Vienna, he became a professor of Byzantine architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts. Many of his projects were neoclassical, but he was working in a milieu where architects increasingly sought out other potentially suitable styles from the past that they could reinterpret in contemporary architecture. Aware of the experiments of his German colleagues with the *Rundbogenstil*[35] and acquainted with Byzantine architecture from Greece, he created a type of neo-Byzantine style that would

29 J.B. Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered* (London: Phaidon, 2003).

30 Hannelore Künzl, *Islamische Stilelemente im Synagogenbau des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1984).

31 Bastea, *The Creation*.

32 Denise-Chloe Alevizou, "'Improved Byzantine Art' in Crete and the Cretan Question: A Case Study," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 12 (2013): http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn13/alevizou-on-improved-byzantine-art-in-crete-and-the-cretan-question (accessed March 30, 2014).

33 Fani K. Spachidou, "I Vyzantini techni ston elliniko typo tou 19ou ai.," PhD thesis (Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki, 2011), 63–110.

34 Georg Nieman Ferdinand von Feldegg, *Theophilus Hansen und seine Werke* (Vienna: A. Schroll & Co., 1893).

35 The *Rundbogenstil* was a style mixing Romanesque and Renaissance references, characterized by the use of round arches and openings, which were also used in the neo-Byzantine (as opposed to the *Spitzbogenstil*, which used references to the Gothic style and therefore pointed arches and openings). Kathleen Curran, "The German Rundbogenstil."

prove successful throughout the Orthodox world. Hansen did not attempt to create any national style, but because his neo-Byzantine formula was suitable for Orthodox churches, his style was interpreted as appropriate for a national style, especially in Serbia. For Hansen, choosing a style for a building was clearly connected to the function of the building: this was why the cemetery chapel he designed for the Ştirbey family in Buftea was very similar to the chapel of the Invalids' Dome in Lviv (1855–1860) or to the cemetery chapel in Matzleinsdorf (1858). However, his Serbian students in the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, Svetozar Ivačković, Vladimir Nikolić, Jovan Ilkić, and Dušan Živanović[36] instrumentalized this style, which Ivačković described as "Byzantine but modernized," as national.[37]

FIGURE 6.1
Theophil von Hansen, The chapel of the Invalids' Dome in Lviv (1855–1860), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:House_of_disabled,_Lviv#/media/File:%D0%A6%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%B2%D0%B0..jpg.

36 Svetozar Ivačković studied in Vienna between 1869 and 1874; Jovan Ilkić completed his studies in 1883, Dušan Živanović finished in 1886; and Vladimir Nikolić finished around the same time. Miodrag Jovanović, "Teofil Hanzen, 'hanzentatika' i hanzenovi srpski učenici," *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice srpske* 21 (1985): 235–236.

37 Svetozar Ivačković, "Crkva u selu Guncati," *Srpski tehnički list* 5 (1983): 110, as quoted in Aleksandar Ignjatović, "Između žezla i ključa," 62.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, many churches with a Greek-cross plan, with the same type of portal on the western facade and with alternating red and white horizontal stripes on the exterior walls, were built in Serbia and Vojvodina. Svetozar Ivačković built the Transfiguration Church in Pančevo (1874–1878), the Saints Peter and Paul Church in Jagodina (1899), the chapel of the New Cemetery in Belgrade (1890–1893), and the funerary chapel of the Hariš family in Zemun (1875); Vladimir Nikolić designed the funerary chapel of the Paunović family in Vukovar and the cemetery chapel in Sremski Karlovci (1891–1904), Dušan Živanović built the Saint George Church in Kruševac and Jovan Ilkić the Trinity Church in Paracin. Hansen's solution for the Invalids' Dome in Lviv, where he used a mixture of references to Romanesque and Byzantine architecture, was adopted by his Serbian students for a series of buildings accommodating church institutions (Vladimir Nikolić's Orthodox seminary and the new bishopric in Sremski Karlovci; Jovan Ilkić's Saint Sava's Dome in Belgrade, with the facade decorated with the heraldic signs of all "Serbian lands," and the Metropolitan Palace in Niš). All four architects were also involved in a project run by the Ministry of Public Works to design the standard blueprints for more than forty village churches.[38] The style used for all these ecclesiastical buildings, called *Hanzenatika* in Serbian, indicated the desire of all those involved—the Church, the state, and the architects—to connect religious architecture with the Byzantine style.

Besides its influence on the development of the Serbian national style, the same *Hanzenatika* can be recognized in the work of the Romanian Alexandru Orăscu (Domniţa Bălaşa Church in Bucharest, 1881–1885). It also decisively marked Bulgarian architecture in the first decade of the twentieth century, as it was used by the first generations of architects who believed that architecture should be built in a national style: Anton Tornyov (the Saint Nicholas the New Church, 1896–1900), Friedrich Grünanger (the Institute of Theology, 1902; the Orthodox Seminary with the Saint John of Rila Church, 1902–1914), Yordan Milanov and Petko Momchilov (the Holy Synod Palace, 1908), and

38 For some of the churches, these architects were joined by Milan Kapetanović and Aleksandar Bugarski. Such churches were built in Markovci (1883); Kalna, Gradašnica, Vrbica, Vranić, Crnojci, and Soko Banja (all in 1884); Guncati and Negotina (1885); and Rasnici (1886). Ivačković also wrote about some of these projects in *Srpski tehnički list*, the official journal of the Association of Serbian Architects and Engineers. See Draginja Maskareli, "Neovizantijski tipski projekti za crkvene građevine u Srbiji," *Niš and Byzantium* 2 (2003): 415–422.

FIGURE 6.2 *Svetozar Ivačković, The chapel of the New Cemetery in Belgrade (1890–1893), https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/51/Crkva_na_Novom_Groblju.JPG.*

Josef Schnitter (the Holy Assumption Church in Batak, 1912).[39] By the turn of the century, the idea that this style was suitable for churches and church institutions was widespread, especially in the architectural circles where Hansen's influence was powerful. However, not everyone accepted the idea that this style could also express national identity,[40] and so it was more than stylistic issues that led this version of *Hanzenatika* to become a "national Bulgarian style." In accordance with the typological thinking of nineteenth-century architectural theory, the neo-Byzantine style seemed fitting for many institutions strongly

39 For an overview of the works of these architects, but without mentioning Hansen, see Hristo Ganchev, "The Art Nouveau Architecture in Bulgaria: Development and National Examples," *Art Nouveau / Jugendstil Architecture in Europe*, ed. Hans-Dieter Dyroff (Bonn: German Commission for UNESCO, 1988), 26–36.

40 Yordan Milanov, Friedrich Grünanger, and Josef Schnitter studied in Vienna: Georgi Kocev, Georgi Carev, Dieter Klein, Ljubinka Stoilova, Marcella Stern, and Petar Jokimov, *Österreichische architekturenflüsse in Sofia um die Jahrhundertwende* (exhibition catalog) (Sofia: Museum for the History of Sofia, 1998). In general, with several exceptions, Bulgarian architects studied in German-speaking technical schools; for instance, Anton Tornyov studied in Stuttgart and Petko Momchilov in Dresden.

connected with nation-building. In Serbia it was often used for educational institutions, and in Bulgaria it seemed appropriate for health institutions (the Aleksandrovska Hospital, Yordan Milanov and Petko Momchilov, 1884–1885; the Central Mineral Baths, Friedrich Grünanger and Petko Momchilov, 1904–1905; the Maternity Hospital, Petko Momchilov, 1907), because education and health were key issues for both countries and their improvement was considered essential for the countries' "Europeanization."[41]

Byzantine and neo-Byzantine buildings decisively marked the new center of Sofia. Within the bounds of only a few street blocks stood the Byzantine Saint Sophia,[42] Pomerantsev's Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (a neo-Byzantine construction that materialized Russia's pan-Slavic ideology[43]), the *Hanzenatika* neo-Byzantine style of the Holy Synod and of the Central Mineral Baths, and, interestingly, the same *Hanzenatika* neo-Byzantine style employed for the new synagogue (Friedrich Grünanger, 1904–1909).[44] Even though the synagogue had more Orientalizing decorations than other neo-Byzantine buildings, and its ornaments were frequently described as "Moorish,"[45] the building resembles other buildings in the area. Defining "Moorish" would be just as complicated as defining "Byzantine," and distinguishing between them was certainly difficult. Nevertheless, both "Moorish" and "Byzantine" were considered "Oriental" and therefore suitable for synagogues throughout Europe. The synagogue's

41 In Bulgaria, advances in education and health were also instrumentalized as proof that the country had overcome the "backwardness" caused by Ottoman rule, even though the same improvements had been sought in the Ottoman Empire since the Tanzimat.

42 The sixth-century church was severely damaged; its restoration began in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

43 Designed 1879–1882 by the Russian architect Aleksandr Pomerantsev and built 1904–1912, the cathedral is a memorial church commemorating the War of Independence and the Russian soldiers who died fighting for Bulgaria's liberation. Several Alexander Nevsky cathedrals were built in the same period, some of them in neo-Russian style (those in Tallinn, 1894–1900, and Lodz, 1884), others in neo-Byzantine style (those in Tbilisi, 1871–1897; Warsaw, 1894–1912; and Novosibirsk 1896–1889).

44 The Orthodox cathedral, the synagogue, and the sixteenth-century Banya Bashi Mosque stand quite close to each other in Sofia's center. However, of all the mosques in Sofia, Banya Bashi was the only one whose religious function was preserved, because it was tied to Bulgarian property rights in Istanbul, while other mosques were demolished, transformed into churches, or given secular functions. Elitza Stanoeva, "Interpretations of the Ottoman Urban Legacy in the National Capital Building of Sofia (1878–1940)," *Ottoman Legacies in the Balkans and the Middle East*, eds. E. Ginio and K. Kaser (Jerusalem: European Forum at the Hebrew University Conference and Lecture Series, 2013), 209–230.

45 Decorative elements perceived as "Oriental" were also described as "Moorish" by Bulgarian architects when encountered in medieval and early modern architecture in Bulgaria.

FIGURE 6.3
Anton Tornyov, The church of Saint Nicholas the New in Sofia (1896–1900).
AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

similarity to other neo-Byzantine buildings (and especially its facade's alternating red and white stripes) led to a perception that this building was an example of "Bulgarian national style."[46] But it is not clear if this style was chosen deliberately to create that perception (being identified as "Bulgarians" could have been desirable for the Jewish community) or simply because many synagogues in Europe had a similar appearance.[47] In any case, the perceived or intentional national Bulgarian style of this synagogue sheds light on one of the most complex problems raised by the national styles: in order for them to achieve their goal and express the nation, they had to be recognized as such by "the nation." However, there is little evidence that people were interested in the style of the

46 The synagogue is perceived as being in a Bulgarian style even in recent literature, for example in Alexander Kiossev, "Legacy or Legacies: Competitions and Conflicts," in *Europe and the Historical Legacies in the Balkans*, eds. Raymond Detrez and Barbara Segaert (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2008), 49–68.

47 The architect was apparently asked to build a synagogue similar to the "Turkish" synagogue in Vienna. The synagogue in Sofia has nothing in common with the "Turkish" synagogue in Vienna. However, the commission of the Jewish community revised and approved the design on several occasions, and it was apparently satisfied with the result. Carol Herselle Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning* (New York: Dover, 1996), 183–186.

buildings being built. Most of the time the style was not an issue at all, not even for the authorities who could have regulated it, or for the representatives of state institutions who had decision-making powers on a building site.

Hansen's influence can be also identified in the design of the village church in Valea Călugărească (1893) by Romanian architect Ion Mincu. This church demonstrated how a "generic" neo-Byzantine style could be adapted to include local specificities in order to be not only suited for a Romanian village but also rooted in the Romanian village. The portal above the entrance and the alternation of white and red stripes on the facades pointed toward its *Hanzenatika* model, but Mincu's church was shorter and had a different ground plan, with three apses, which brought it closer to the Wallachian churches of the eighteenth century.

However, Mincu's approach was unique, and the fact that *Hanzentatika* was a generic Byzantine style and did not have any particular Serbian or Romanian or Bulgarian churches as models was noted and criticized. In 1890, Andra Stefanović, an architect and professor at the Higher School of Engineering in Belgrade, wrote that this style did not have any "specific characteristics of the Serbian."[48] What was not explicitly noted was the fact that this style brought with it a certain Orientalizing perspective: Hansen believed that the Byzantine style was Oriental and that his neo-Byzantine was suitable for the eastern provinces of the Habsburg Empire, for the Balkans, and for Orthodox milieus because they were also Oriental.

What Could be Local Tradition

In criticizing *Hanzenatika* for not containing anything specifically Serbian, Stefanović meant that a national style should be conceived as continuing a local tradition. Because it did not, *Hanzenatika* was just as foreign as all the other styles imported from Western Europe. A common trope of architects' writings was to lament that their countries were losing their architectural distinctiveness, that foreign architects were turning the local towns into copies of Western European cities. Indeed, throughout the Balkans neoclassicism and eclecticism prevailed, in both public and private constructions, as Europeanization was a common desire in all countries, including the Ottoman Empire. If in the first half of the nineteenth century, towns in the Balkans looked quite similar due to their vernacular architecture, after the mid-nineteenth century they

48 Andra Stefanović, "Tehnički snimak Kalenića," *Srpski tehnički list* (1890), 1, quoted in A. Ignjatović, "Između žezla i ključa," 63.

underwent comparable processes of modernization intended to make them look more like Western towns. Even before the mid-nineteenth century, several Central European architects were active throughout the area: before settling in Bucharest, Schlatter had been working south of the Danube; prior to making the first plans for Bucharest, the engineer Rudolph von Borroczyn was designing the plans for Argos.[49] This situation continued well into the twentieth century, with foreign architects winning architectural competitions and being given official commissions. For example, the National Theater in Sofia was designed by Fellner and Hellmer, who designed theaters in Central and East-Central Europe, from Prague to Odessa, including the one in Iaşi. Many ministries and cultural and educational institutions were built in neoclassical or eclectic styles by foreign and local architects (sometimes even by those who were otherwise promoting the invention or use of national styles). In Belgrade these include the National Theater (Aleksandar Bugarsky, 1868–1869), the Ministry of Justice (Svetozar Ivačković and Jovan Subotić, 1882–1883), the railway station (Dragutin Milutinović, 1884), and the National Bank (Konstantin Jovanović, 1888–1889).[50] In Bucharest these include the Atheneum (Paul Louis Albert Galleron, 1886–1888), the University (Alexandru Orăscu, 1857–1869), the National Bank (Cassien Bernard, Albert Galleron, Grigore Cerchez, and Constantin Băicoianu, 1883–1900), and the Savings Bank (Paul Gottereau, 1900).[51] And in Sofia these include the Military Club (Antonín Kolář and Nicola Lazarov, 1895 and 1907), the Central Post Hall (Yordan Milanov, 1893), and the Parliament (Konstantin Jovanović).[52]

Upon returning home from their studies abroad, local architects reacted to this context by deploring both the fact that they were not protected from foreign competition and did not have enough access to important projects, and the fact that their countries' image had been altered in what they saw as unacceptable ways. But the way they verbalized these complaints echoed the words of the foreigners they blamed. Ion Mincu warned, "Entire towns were built out of nothing in this country—Sinaea, for example—and instead of

49 Vassilis Dorovinis, "Capodistrias et la planification d'Argos," *Bulletin de correspondence hellénique* 6 (1980): 501–545.

50 Aleksandar Kadijević, *Estetika arhitekture akademizma: XIX–XX vek* (Belgrade: Građevinska knjiga, 2005).

51 Ana-Maria Zahariade, "French Influences in Romanian Architecture," *French Cultural Studies* 11 (2000): 347–365.

52 Hristo Ganchev, Gregory Doychinov, and Ivan Stoyanov, *Bălgariya 1900: Evropeyski vliyanyia v bălgarskoto gradoustroystvo, arhitektura, parkove i gradini. 1878–1918* (Sofia: Arh&Art, 2002).

continuing a tradition and making an original architecture that would be the expression of our habits, climates, needs, and feelings, we composed a bizarre and hybrid mixture of poorly copied models of architecture from all countries and all climates, a mixture presenting the most ridiculous combination: the *maison du plaisance* from around Paris with the Flemish house, miniature Gothic castles with villas from southern Italy." This was just a decade after Viollet-le-Duc wrote: "We build huge edifices for which enormous sums are spent, and we do not know exactly what should be in them. [. . .] And remember that this bad habit does not apply solely to monuments. How many honorable gentlemen are there [. . .] who, when they want a house built for them, are interested instead in building a chalet, or an Italian villa, or an English cottage, following a passing fantasy, without knowing if they would live comfortably in that box? This is why you can see Italian villas in northern France and Swiss chalets in Nice."[53]

When defending the idea of inventing national styles, local architects cited foreign architects' opinions. The first Romanian professional journal dedicated to architecture was put together by proponents of the Romanian national style. Its first issue quoted the German architect Paul Wallot, who said that the architectural competition for the Chamber of Deputies in Bucharest "would have been more interesting and more original if the projects had been inspired from elements of Romanian architecture."[54] The Bulgarian architect Anton Tornyov quoted the influential art historian Cornelius Gurlitt, who was disappointed by the new architecture in Sofia and had expected to encounter fewer Western styles and more "Bulgarian architecture."[55] When the architect Konstantin Jovanović was appointed to design the mausoleum of the royal Serbian family in Oplenac, in 1909, he cited the Viennese art historian Josef Strzygowski to evaluate its conformity with Byzantine models.[56]

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53 Ion Mincu, "Şcoalele noastre de arte frumoase," *Literatura şi arta română* 4 (1895–1896): 220; Eugene Viollet-le-Duc, *Comment on construit une maison* (*Histoire d'une maison*) (Paris: J. Hetzel, 1887), 189–190.

54 "Primul banchet al arhitecţilor români," *Analele Arhitecturei şi ale Artelor cu care se leagă* 1 (1891): 15, also quoted in Carmen Popescu, "The Imagery of Power: Bucharest's City Hall," *Artmargins* [*Online*] (2002), http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/archive/308-the-imagery-of-power-bucharests-city-hall- (accessed April 2015).

55 Anton Tornyov, "Inzhenera i arhitekta kato pionieri na stroitelnoto izkustvo," *Izvestiya na BIAD* 22–23 (1922): 6.

56 Nenad Makuljević, "The Political Reception of the Vienna School: Josef Strzygowski and Serbian Art History," *Journal of Art Historiography* 8 (2013): 9, https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/makuljevic.pdf (accessed August 2015).

To support their claims that a national style could and should be invented, architects needed to demonstrate that there was indeed a local architectural tradition that was prestigious and therefore usable for constructions just as monumental and modern as those built in Western styles. Educated abroad and taught that each nation has an architectural history, they knew that their countries had an architectural tradition waiting to be identified and used. The process of local architects discovering older architecture in Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia went hand-in-hand with their familiarizing themselves with Western architecture. And these two occurrences shaped each other, even if the relationship between the two was asymmetric, with the search for what was local framed by the knowledge of what was Western. Frequently, local architects conceptualized local architecture in terms of what it lacked when compared with the West: they deplored it for not having produced any cathedrals or "monuments" or for not organizing towns along large, straight streets.[57] As local architects got acquainted themselves with Western historiography, they sometimes criticized local architecture for not having a "real" history, for a lack of tradition. For instance, the author of the first Romanian art history textbook lamented that there were only two examples of "beautiful" architecture in Romania: the Monastery Church of Curtea de Argeş and the Three Hierarchs Church in Iaşi.[58] But as Western historiography itself increasingly included areas outside of Europe and reevaluated historical periods and construction categories, architecture in Eastern Europe gradually became a plausible research topic. The loosening of the Western canon allowed the conceptualization of the Gothic and the Romanesque styles as the organizing principles of the architecture built between the end of the ancient era and its "rebirth" as the Renaissance. At the same time, Byzantine architecture needed to be conceptualized in order to fill various gaps in a comprehensive history of architecture. It provided the link between ancient times and the Romanesque, enabling the composition of consistent stylistic genealogies, and it also accounted for the architectural tradition of a part of what was becoming "Europe." As the architectural manifestation of Orthodoxy, the Byzantine "style" was supposed to be found in all Orthodox countries, while the architects from those countries were willing to attach the local architectural production to this "style" as the only imaginable way of putting their countries on the map of architectural history.

57 Petru Verussi, "Despre arta naţională," *Analele Arhitecturei* 7 (1891): 4–7.

58 Nicolae Idieru, *Istoria artelor frumoase. Architectura, sculptura, pictura, musica din toate timpurile şi din toate ţările, inclusiv Rumânia* (Bucharest: Tipografia Joseph Gobl, 1889).

The remaining part of this chapter will take a closer look at the ways in which Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria created their architectural historiographies and national styles, especially in relation to what was conceived as Byzantine heritage.

Serbia

The first scholarly account of medieval architecture in Serbia, written in 1847 by Franz Mertens, included several ideas by which subsequent research would be organized. He divided medieval architecture into two periods, the first marked by an important Romanesque influence and the second by the adoption and transformation of a Byzantine style, but he focused on the Western influences. This approach was rather common in architectural surveys written by German-speaking scholars in the nineteenth century, especially by those attached to the Monuments Commission in Vienna: when writing about the medieval and early modern heritage in the Balkans, they were interested in identifying Western influences and found local distinctiveness in the blending of a provincial Byzantine tradition with elements coming from the West, accentuating the fact that buildings were small and rather unimpressive.[59] For subsequent Serbian historiography, Felix Kanitz's publications had a major impact.[60]

One of the first systematic surveys of churches in Serbia was conducted by Milan Miličević and published in 1867. Miličević was not necessarily interested in stylistic issues, and only some of the monasteries he described were medieval. But the way he conceived monasteries as places where religious and Serbian identity was preserved throughout time, and especially his manner of using architecture as a marker of territorial expansion and as evidence of an imperial past that needed to be continued in the present, proved influential on later writers. The late nineteenth century saw the conceptualization of a specifically Serbian heritage that would be the most appropriate for inventing a national style, due to the writings of Dragutin Milutinović and Mihail Valtrović. They maintained the periodization proposed by Mertens, considering the

59 The first period began with Stefan's reign and included the churches in Žiča, Studenica, and Kamenica: Franz Mertens, "Etwas über Serbien," *Berliner Kalender* (Berlin: Karl Reimarus, 1847), 161–194.

60 Felix Kanitz traveled through Serbia and Bulgaria; especially relevant for Serbian historiography was his *Serbiens Byzantinische Monumente* (Vienna: Hof- und Staats Druckerei, 1862).

corpus of ecclesiastical architecture built during the Nemanjić dynasty (from the end of the twelfth century to the end of the thirteenth century) as distinct from the architecture built during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and their ideas would become the standard approach in Europe after Gabriel Millet disseminated them.[61]

But their most influential contribution was using architectural history to demonstrate a complex relationship between the Byzantine Empire and medieval Serbia by employing stylistic criteria as a means to legitimize political issues. Contemporary historiography gradually emphasized the imperial identity of medieval Serbia and Stefan Dušan's title as "the emperor of the Serbs and the Greeks" as a powerful argument in favor of Serbia's territorial claims.[62] The geographic location of medieval monuments demonstrated the presence of the medieval Serbian "nation" and could therefore indicate the proper borders of modern Serbia: "These silent monuments and their founders have eternally obliged the Serbian nation by *being witnesses to the ancient and glorious past, showing that the places where they stand—either intact or in ruins—undoubtedly represent Serbian national territories*. Looking at them, Serbs become proud of their own past; at the same time, they are a life-giving source for the prosperous future; therefore, the Serbs have no doubt whether or not these territories deserve to be re-conquered by force and blood."[63]

The architecture built during the Nemanjić dynasty gradually became a "school of architecture," namely "the Raška school," while the architecture dating from the fourteenth century to the Ottoman conquest became "the Morava school."[64] Conceptualizing the former "phases" of medieval architecture on the territory of Serbia as "schools" was a way of suggesting that the relationship between Serbian and Byzantine architecture was similar to the political relationship between the Serbian Kingdom and the Byzantine Empire. During the nineteenth century, art historians generally organized the artistic production of the past into "schools." "Schools of art" were believed to be the local manifestations of a more encompassing "international" style—for example, there was

61 Gabriel Millet, *L'ancien art serbe. I. Les églises* (Paris: Picard, 1919).

62 Aleksandar Ignjatović, "Byzantium Evolutionized: Architectural History and National Identity in Turn-of-the-Century Serbia," in *"Regimes of Historicity" in Southeastern and Northern Europe, 1890–1945*, eds. Diana Mishkova, Balázs Trencsényi, and Marja Jalava (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 254–274.

63 Mihailo Valtrović, *Godišnjak Srpske kraljevske akademije* 13 (1899): 91–104 (italics original), as quoted in Ignjatović, "Byzantium Evolutionized," 268.

64 A third school later appeared, the "Serbo-Byzantine school," grouping buildings dated from the end of the thirteenth century to the mid-fourteenth century.

a "German school" and a "French school" of Gothic architecture. These schools were often instrumentalized as national—for example, the "Dutch school" in seventeenth-century painting. Similarly, Serbian architects believed that the Serbian schools belonged to a Byzantine "style" but that they were specifically Serbian. Just as historians conceived the medieval Serbian states as gradually emancipating themselves from the Byzantine sphere of influence to the point of challenging Byzantine supremacy in the Balkans, the architects and art historians imagined the architecture in these states as developing and transforming Byzantine architecture towards a distinct architectural idiom: just as Serbia was "the daughter of Byzantium,"[65] Serbian architecture was a "fruit growing on a branch of the Byzantine tree."[66] However, the Morava school was considered "more Serbian" than the Raška school, for several reasons. First, local character was imagined as developing over time, as the Serbian states distanced themselves from Byzantine models. Therefore, later examples would be "more Serbian" than earlier ones. At the same time, the linear development of Serbian architecture was seen as "rising," in contrast to Byzantine architecture, which was "declining," and the directions of each mirrored the fortunes of the states they represented. Second, the Raška school had considerable Western influence, and foreign historiography interpreted this influence as proof of Hungary's hegemonic role in the area in the Middle Ages. As such, the architecture of the Morava school became the privileged source for inventing a national style that would continue and develop a local tradition.

The appearance of these Morava-style churches also made them more suitable for modern interpretation: their richly decorated and polychrome facades were more inspiring, as architectural theory in general was interested in polychromy, while decoration was essential in conceptualizing a style, and at the end of the nineteenth century, it was the decoration rather than the structure of a building that was believed to express distinctiveness. In fact, one of the most important theorists of the national style after the turn of the century was Dragutin Inkiostri Medenjak, who underlined the role of ornaments and decoration in the creation of a national style.[67] This variant of national style that used the Morava school as reference developed mostly after 1900, starting with Dušan Živanović's church in Trstenik (1900), its most influential examples being

65 M. Valtrović and D. Milutinović, *Valtrović i Milutinović: dokumenti II* (Belgrade: Istorijski muzej Srbije 2007 [1881]), 106, quoted in A. Ignijatović, "Byzantium Evolutionized," 262.

66 M. Valtrović, "Srpske crkvene starine na Budimpeštanskoj zemaljskoj izložbi," *Starinar* 4 (1885): 102, quoted in A. Ignijatović, "Byzantium Evolutionized," 262.

67 Sonja Vulešević, *Dragutin Inkiostri Medenjak: pionir jugoslovenskog dizajna* (Belgrade: Muzej primenjene umetnosti, 1998).

the works of Branko Tanazević in Belgrade (the Central Telephone Office, 1905–1908; and the Ministry of Education, now the Vuk Foundation, 1912–1913). One factor in this style's success was the restoration of many medieval monuments associated with the Morava school, especially of King Lazar's church in Kruševac (1375–1378), undertaken by Petar Popović in 1904–1908. A wooden model of this church was displayed in public places, contributing to a general awareness of the Morava style as representative of Serbian heritage.[68] The national style using references to the Morava school became especially important as a way to mark contested territories as Serbian: one of the earliest examples of its use as an embodiment of Serbian authority was the municipal building built by Petar Popović in Vranje, a border town in southern Serbia (1906–1908). Its ideological function was further complicated by its use by the Yugoslav state during the interwar period, when this style was used extensively for churches as well as for official buildings and for private residences, the most influential architect being Momir Korunović.

Romania

When searching for architectural vestiges that could prove the grandeur of the past and serve as a model for the present, architects often assumed that medieval rulers glorified by contemporary historiography would have left behind important architectural remains. One of the most important figures of the national pantheon of nineteenth-century Romanian historiography was Ştefan cel Mare, who ruled Moldova between 1457 and 1504 and built some of its most iconic buildings, the monastery churches with exterior wall paintings. However, most of these churches were located outside the territory of modern Romania, in Bucovina, which belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Before the architecture built by Ştefan cel Mare entered architectural historiography, it was imagined by an influential Romanian writer and linguist, Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, in ways that demonstrate the permeability between literature and art history, between imagination and archaeological discovery.

In a play published in 1864, Hasdeu placed his characters, Ştefan cel Mare and members of his family and court, in an architectural setting mostly described as Oriental.[69] What is interesting in this case is that Hasdeu combined the

68 A. Ignijatović, "Između žezla i ključa," 64.

69 This Oriental character was justified by several circumstances. First, romantic literature often placed medieval times and the Orient on the same level of exoticism, with the Orient as some kind of perpetual Middle Ages suitable as the setting for extraordinary

narrative topoi of Romantic literature with ideas close to those expressed in contemporary architectural theory, such as the fact that some of the features of Oriental lifestyle and architecture kept alive (even if in a corrupted way) ancient Roman practices, a detail convenient for emphasizing the Latin origins of the Romanians: "In old times, every time a new town was founded, the first and most important buildings [. . .] were a church and a . . . bath. But besides the public baths, those called *thermae* by the Romans, almost every more or less rich boyar house had a private bath, more or less luxurious. The bath of the seneschal Şarpe [. . .] showed in its construction a mix of old Greek-Roman architecture and more modern Moresque or Arab architecture."[70] Connecting the perceived Orientalness of Moldavian architecture with a hammam was a way of making it acceptable by referring to what was beginning by then to be understood as valuable Oriental traits: cleanliness and the buildings dedicated to it.[71] Therefore, by connecting anything Oriental in Moldavian architecture (even if only imagined) with baths, Hasdeu was suggesting that any Oriental influences on the medieval Romanians were not negative but desirable, since they not only concerned healthy practices but also continued ancient Roman habits. Furthermore, he explained that these Oriental features did not originate in the Orient to the southeast of Moldova, the Ottoman Empire, but in the Western European Orient of Moorish architecture: "The builder of this bath was Ibn-Şabrut ben Iţeah, a Spanish Jew."[72] This idea—that whatever

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adventures. Furthermore, the political importance of a medieval ruler was supposed to be accompanied by material wealth, and material luxury was often connected to the Orient or objects originating in the Orient. In addition, the old architecture and street patterns of Moldavian towns were treated as Oriental, without much consideration of how old they really were.

70 "The main apartment was circular, with three rows of stairs leaning on the walls [. . .] in the shape of a horseshoe. In the middle of the room, there was a big octagonal stone [. . .]. Around the stone, through the holes in the marble, cold water was springing upwards [. . .]. A cupola with small windows was built above the apartment, scattering rays of light in the air." Bogdan Petriceicu-Hasdeu, *Ursita*, published first in feuilleton in *Revista literară şi ştiinţifică* (1886).

71 While there was a prolific tradition in Orientalist paintings and literature depicting the hammams as places of decadence, there were also contrary opinions, especially from architects and hygienists, claiming that bathing and hammams were healthy and worthwhile.

72 Ibn-şabrut ben Iţeah "emigrated from the Iberian peninsula because of Catholic persecution after the fall of the Moors, and [. . .] worked in Suceava as an architect. [. . .]. The chapel was the curious production of a Jewish architect, brought up in the Mohammedan school who, nevertheless, did not hesitate to build a Christian temple. What seemed admirable in this church were the arabesques of the walls, sculpted in golden relief on

could be perceived as Oriental in the medieval architecture on the territory of Romania actually came from the West—was not explicitly adopted by scholarly literature but would constantly appear in the following decades, refined by architectural historians, who replaced Moorish Spain with Venice. However, all references to Oriental features were limited to decorations. When Hasdeu described the exterior of a building, he imagined it as Western.[73] The fact that the exterior of the princely palace had the appearance of Western fortified architecture, while the inside was lavishly Oriental, demonstrated the hybrid nature of medieval architecture in Romania, a concept that subsequent architectural histories would also focus on, including the important stipulation that what could be Oriental was not structural but only decorative (both interior and ornamental elements).

The concept of synthesis was especially fruitful for the invention of a Byzantine heritage in Romania, because there were almost no churches in Wallachia dated before the sixteenth century. The Cozia Monastery Church and the Princely Church in Curtea de Argeş were generally dated to the second half of the fourteenth century, but there were no other buildings preserved from the fifteenth century.[74] Since, unlike in Serbia, there was no corpus of medieval buildings to be grouped in a specific local school of architecture, Romanian architectural historians used a different strategy. They needed to emphasize specific buildings that were monumental and decorated enough to become emblematic. The most accomplished example of Wallachian architecture was considered the Monastery Church of Curtea de Argeş (sixteenth

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black marble, the thin columns of rose marble supporting a large ambo, sculpted a giorno and gilded, and the mosaic of the floor, with amazing lively and diverse flowers." B.P. Hasdeu, *Ursita*.

73 "The palace of Ştefan cel Mare had two floors, in Gothic architecture, with pointed doors and windows [...] in a word, a palace that one can see even today in Nuremberg [...]. The apartment of voivoda [Ştefan cel Mare] had a semi-circular shape [...]. The room had a mosaic floor; it was covered in bleak Venetian velvet, on which sparkling flowers were sewn and woven with diamonds and gold; it was furnished with sofas covered with Turkish carpets. In the middle of the apartment there was a circular table in black marble, on which could be seen many precious little things: small golden stags with diamond horns; small peacocks with tails sprinkled with amethysts, rubies, and emeralds; golden dragons with diamond eyes; etc., etc." B.P. Hasdeu, *Ursita*.

74 The architect Petre Antonescu, one of the most active promoters of the Romanian national style, considered the Curtea de Argeş Princely Church to be "in a purely Byzantine style," while the Cozia Monastery Church already showed local features. A decade later the Cozia Monastery Church was compared with the churches belonging to the Morava school by Gheorghe Balş, *O vizită la câteva biserici din Serbia* (Bucharest: Arta românească, 1911).

century). It was first studied by Ludwig Reissenberger in 1860,[75] it was the first monument to be restored by Lecomte de Noüy,[76] and it was used as a model for the pavilions representing Romania at the Universal Exhibitions in Paris in 1868 and 1900. For some Romanian intellectuals, it was the only example of "beautiful architecture";[77] it was also famous for having been built by Master Manole, the main character of a folk ballad that became popular after its modern remake by an influential Romanian poet.[78] Therefore, this church was long seen as an appropriate model for a national style. In references to the medieval heritage in both principalities that formed modern Romania, not only the Monastery Church of Curtea de Argeş but also the Three Hierarchs in Iaşi was praised as "beautiful," but the latter was not generally considered a suitable model for modern interpretation. However, what these two churches had in common was their rich, markedly Oriental, decoration, and this fact encouraged the conceptualization of Romanian distinctiveness in architecture as a mixture of different formal features originating in both the East and the West. This mixture was seen not as an amalgamation lacking any originality, as intellectuals with purist views frequently held it to be, but, in accordance with contemporary eclectic principles, as a superior synthesis generating originality and thus distinctiveness. The models merged in a local synthesis were imagined to originate in the prestigious centers of the East and the West, which, for Romanian historiography, meant Constantinople and Venice.[79] This way, any connection with a less prestigious regional context could be downplayed. Romanian architecture would have a Byzantine core to which Western influences were added to create a unique style. Selecting Venice as a privileged source of these Western influences allowed not only the connection to a Western, Latin site of Byzantine heritage (as San Marco was) but, even better, the explanation of Ottoman features identifiable in Romanian architecture as coming, paradoxically, from the West, from the Orientalizing architecture of early modern Venice. As such, the hybrid character of architecture embodied the hybrid character of the Romanian people. The only speakers of a "noble"

75 Ludwig Reissenberger, "Die bischöfliche Klosterkirche D'Argys in der Walachei," *Jahrbuch der Kaiserlich-Königlichen Central-Commission* 4 (1860): 175–224.

76 Carmen Popescu, "André Lecomte du Noüy (1844–1914) et la restauration des monuments historiques en Roumanie," *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de l'art français* (1998): 287–308.

77 Petru Verussi, "Despre arta naţională," *Analele Arhitecturei* 7 (1891): 145.

78 *The Ballad of Master Manole*, published by Vasile Alecsandri in 1852.

79 George Sterian, *Despre restaurarea monumentelor istorice în străinătate şi în Rumânia* (Iaşi: Tipo-Litografia H. Goldner, 1889).

language of Latin origin in Eastern Europe, and yet Orthodox, the Romanians were supposed to have inherited the best from both the West and the East.

However, for the architects involved in the creation of the national style, there was another church that served as a privileged model: the Stavropoleos Church in Bucharest. This church was less well known outside the architects' circle, and at some point there were even suggestions that it be relocated in order to make room for a modern building.[80] The Stavropoleos Church was less prestigious because it did not have a historical pedigree: it dated from the eighteenth century, when Wallachia was ruled by the Phanariots, and its patron was a small Greek merchant. In the official historiography, the period when the Phanariots ruled Wallachia and Moldova was "stained" by foreign, Oriental influences, and the material culture associated with it was considered a relic of a time of decadence and de-nationalization. But for the architects who conceptualized distinctiveness as hybrid and, like the Serbian architects did, as the result of a gradual distancing from the Byzantine style, the Stavropoleos Church was the final point of an evolution from "Byzantine" towards "national."[81] Its most striking feature was the portico with trilobed arches: the trilobed arch became one of the most common features of national architecture. Therefore, architectural practice—using this church as a model—actually contradicted official historiography. Architects' discourse concerning the Stavropoleos Church was rarely articulated in writing, and their praise of this church contributed only slightly to reconsidering the eighteenth century[82] as something other than a dark period in the history of Romania. Nevertheless, with the increasing success of the national style, Romanian towns and villages were filled with buildings evoking Stavropoleos.

In addition to the Monastery Church of Curtea de Argeş and Stavropoleos, another important historical source was employed in the creation of the national style: the architecture built during the reign of Constantin

80 Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcaş, "Iarăşi Stavropoleos (II). Răspuns domnului I. Mincu," *Epoca* 9 (1904): 1–2.

81 "[Stavropoleos] is a very precious 'standard model,' which means the end of the artistic road traveled by our ancestors, the end of a road that started from the 'pure Byzantine' style and reached the 'heterogeneous style' [. . .] that we call the 'Romanian style.' Therefore, Stavropoleos Church is, for us, the last manifestation of the development of native art, and the end to which the thread of tradition needs to be knotted again, so as to lead our future generations of architects and be a source of inspiration for them." Ion Mincu, "Răspuns d-lui Tzigara-Samurcaş," *Epoca* 83 (1904): 1–2.

82 For example, Nicolae Iorga reconsidered the eighteenth century and at least some of the Phanariot rulers in vol. 7 of his *Istoria românilor. Reformatorii* (Bucharest: Imprimeria naţională, 1938).

Brâncoveanu (r. 1688–1714). This source would prove to be the most prone to nationalization and therefore the most enduring historical reference of the Romanian national style. Constantin Brâncoveanu ruled for a relatively long period, and he supported numerous construction projects. Thus, a relatively consistent corpus of architecture survived from his time, enabling the architectural historians to conceptualize the formal characteristics of this corpus as a "style." Both religious and residential buildings could be found in this "Brancovan style," which was also quite richly decorated. The ruler who gave it the name, Constantin Brâncoveanu, had a tragic end; he was decapitated by order of the sultan, along with all his sons,[83] as the last native ruler to be subsequently replaced by the Phanariots appointed in Constantinople. As such, his was the last period of "national flowering" before foreign rule resulted in the Romanian nation's Orientalization during the eighteenth century and indiscriminate Westernization during the nineteenth century. If identifying distinctiveness meant the "return" of the Romanian nation to its "authentic roots," the "Brancovan style" was the ideal stopping point.

As a basis for postulating continuity between the Byzantine architecture and the medieval architecture built on the territory of Romania, the concept of revival was proposed. Its proponents held that the Byzantine tradition vanished with the fall of Constantinople but was revived and adopted in the Romanian principalities because they maintained a degree of autonomy from the Ottoman Empire, as opposed to Bulgaria and Serbia, which were fully part of it.[84] As such, the Romanian principalities were seen not only as the guardians of the Orthodox faith in a Balkans threatened by Islamization, but also the guardians of all Byzantine traditions, including architecture. Reviving Romanian medieval architecture in the nineteenth century was thus a tradition in itself, because nineteenth-century architects were doing what medieval builders had done when reviving Byzantine architecture. This revival manifested itself fully in periods of political autonomy—this was why the Romanians preserved the true Byzantine art, law, or court life, and not the Serbians or the Bulgarians who were part of the Ottoman Empire, and this was also why, working in an independent state, architects had a duty to connect with their Byzantine roots. This invented Byzantine architectural heritage was further used as the material evidence for interpreting all of Romanian culture as a continuation of Byzantine culture, an idea that was famously expressed by the Romanian historian

83 In 1992 Brâncoveanu and his four sons were all canonized as martyrs of the Orthodox Church.

84 Nicolae Gabrielescu, "Privire generală asupra monumentelor naţionale şi mijlocul de a împiedica distrugerea lor," *Analele arhitecturii* 7 (1892): 148–152.

Nicolae Iorga as "*Byzance après Byzance*." In turn, this idea would contribute to the ways in which the Byzantine heritage was appropriated by Bulgaria and Serbia as well.

The first architects to experiment with the use of local architecture for the creation of a national style were Ion Mincu and Ion N. Socolescu.[85] They both valued the Monastery Church of Curtea de Argeş and Stavropoleos, but in addition to considering religious architecture as suitable for the creation of a national style, they were also interested in vernacular architecture, something that was, again, at odds with the contemporary official historiography. Ion Mincu turned to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century residential architecture, which was quite similar to the contemporary Ottoman architecture in the Balkans, before any attempt was made at explicitly nationalizing this kind of architecture (his restaurant, which was intended to be the pavilion representing Romania at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1889; his Girls School, 1888–1889; and several private houses). Ion N. Socolescu invented a version of national style with polychrome stucco decorations that also evoked Ottoman architecture (the town hall in Constanţa, 1895; several private houses built between 1889 and 1891). As such, they made use of a heritage that would only subsequently be de-Ottomanized by being nationalized or by being included in a historical narrative that obscured its Ottoman influences by labeling it "post-Byzantine." They only rarely explain their choice of sources, and when they do, they refer generally to "local architecture." However, the next generations of architects would scarcely make references to vernacular architecture, preferring ecclesiastical models.

The Romanian national style was initially used mostly for private houses and schools. In 1906 a General Romanian Exhibition was held in Bucharest to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the proclamation of the Kingdom of Romania, the fortieth year of the reign of King Charles I, and 1,800 years since the conquest of Dacia by the Romans. The architects assigned to build the exhibition pavilions, Ştefan Burcuş and Victor Ştefănescu, designed most of them in national style, and this had a major impact on its development: proving suitable for monumental buildings, the national style came to be regarded as a suitable choice for official buildings such as town halls, county

85 They were colleagues in Paris, at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts; Ion Mincu was professor of architecture in Bucharest and was generally credited with the invention of the national style, because he was the first to design in this style, and with its promotion via his students. However, Ion N. Socolescu's importance was comparable, because he founded the first Romanian journal dedicated to architecture, which focused mainly on heritage and national style.

FIGURE 6.4 *Ion Mincu, The restaurant "Bufetul la Şosea" (1892).* AUTHOR'S PHOTO.

councils, ministries, libraries, and museums. During the interwar period, when Transylvania and Bucovina were added to the kingdom, building in this style became a way to mark new territories as Romanian.

Moldova in the Habsburg Context

The architecture of Moldova was rarely found useful for reinterpretations in the national Romanian style. It is true that the architects who invented this style lived in Wallachia, but this should not necessarily have been an obstacle. For one thing, it is not clear to what extent they were familiar with the monuments from firsthand experience, as opposed to from written sources and illustrations. Most likely, architecture in Moldova was less attractive because it was less suitable from an architect's point of view, even if it might have been useful in terms of official historiography.

If French-educated architects' emphasis on decoration and identifying distinctiveness in decorative motifs meant that Moldavian architecture was of little interest to them, for the architects educated in German-speaking milieus, distinctiveness was to be found in structure, while in order to be noticeable,

architecture did not necessarily need to be monumental. In addition to the influence of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts for the creation of the Romanian national style, one can also identify echoes of the *Rundbogenstil* experiments in Germany. George Mandrea was one of the first Romanian architects to study, write about, and take inspiration from medieval architecture both in Wallachia and in Moldova. He was educated in Dresden, so he was familiar with the neo-Romanesque, a style influencing his projects for the Delea Veche Church (1894–1896) and the Basilescu Church (1898) in Bucharest, where he redesigned the Western facade of the church in Curtea de Argeş in the manner of a typical Romanesque Western facade, replacing the towers with Moldavian domes. The result was considered to be in a "Romanian style" so convincing that it was cited as an example in *Analele arhitecturii*, the only journal specialized in architecture.[86]

The first scholarly accounts of medieval Moldavian monuments were written by Austrian art historians, as many of these monuments are located in Bucovina, which was, until 1918, part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Austrian architects' interest in the architecture of Moldavia (actually that of Bucovina) was similar to the way in which they noted the architecture of other peripheral provinces of the Empire, such as Dalmatia and Bosnia.[87] But while Eitelberger, the first Viennese scholar of Hungarian and Dalmatian architecture, was interested in identifying Western medieval styles in the areas he was researching and thus in connecting them to the center, Bucovina's first scholar, Josef Hlávka, insisted on identifying local distinctiveness, even if this distinctiveness was due to Western influences. In 1866 Josef Hlávka published an article in *Österreichisches Revue* praising the architecture of Bucovina built in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries as original: "[…] these monuments are of the highest interest, since they are the evidence, throughout an almost three-hundred-year period, of a predominantly independent, ecclesiastical, and national art activity based on the tradition of the Byzantine style, only very slightly influenced, or rather animated, by Western medieval building forms. In contrast to the monuments in Greece and the Balkan countries from the same period, where the construction and forms inherited from the Byzantine art are found reproduced in a more mechanical than spiritual way […] in the

86 "Biserica Delea Veche," *Analele arhitecturii şi ale artelor cu care se leagă* 11 (1893): 174–176.

87 And, as Maximilian Hartmuth rightly argued, also the architecture of Serbia and Wallachia. See Maximilian Hartmuth, "Vienna and the Art Historical 'Discovery' of the Balkans," in *Orientalismen in Ostmitteleuropa. Diskurse, Akteure und Disziplinen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, eds. Robert Born and Sarah Lemmen (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2014), 106–117.

case of the standing monuments in Bucovina, we are talking about a totally independent school that emerged from the essence of the Byzantine style and the ritual requirements of the Eastern Church, both in the general construction of the interior space and in a special development of dome construction and forms unlike anything attempted in any other period and whose architectural singularity, therefore, needs to be recognized."[88] Originality was explained by connecting architecture with what was perceived as political independence—the lack of it condemned architecture built on the territory of the Ottoman Empire to endlessly copy Byzantine models. This connection, and the importance placed on the dome structure of Moldavian monuments, would later become the canonical approach to Moldavian architecture in Romanian historiography.

Hlávka conceptualized the originality of Moldavian architecture by projecting into the past one of the main tenets of architectural theory and practice in the nineteenth century: the ability to adopt forms and construction methods in a way that went beyond imitation, metabolizing the inner logic and construction principles of a historical style. This was what made Moldavian architecture important in his view: it demonstrated the afterlife of the Byzantine style in an independent development triggered by the necessity to adapt the style to the local geography and climate, and set in motion by subtle influences of Western art.[89] Although he used words such as "evolution," "development," and "process," he seemed less interested in this independent school's chronology: he situated it in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, but he made no further attempt at periodization and did not propose any dating for any of his few examples. Thus the image this independent school had was rather static, while if there was any dynamic, it was due to the Western influences, which, even if discreet, had the role of orienting development from the Byzantine towards the local. He stated that Moldavian architecture should have responded to the requirements of religion but did not explain what he meant by that. Nor did he try to investigate who built the churches he mentioned, or who founded them. He

88 "The essential characteristic that makes churches in Bucovina different from those in Greece and the Balkan countries consists partly of the redesign of the plan, partly of the height ratios of the inner church space, and finally of the essentially different construction mode of the whole vault system, especially the distinctive development of the dome construction and the dome shape." Josef Hlávka, "Die Griechisch-orientalischen Kirchenbauten in der Bukowina," in *Österreichisches Revue* 4 (1866): 106–107.

89 "This transformation of the old Byzantine construction must be regarded as an essentially independent development, emerging from the nature of the [local] conditions, which may have been stimulated by a foreign influence but was not determined by it." Josef Hlávka, "Die Griechisch-orientalischen Kirchenbauten": 108.

also did not attribute to them any kind of ethnicity. Architecture in Bucovina, he maintained, had an agency of its own, with all developments responding strictly to questions of construction and aesthetics: architecture was a "system," with internal rules organized around concepts such as "inner nature," "constructive logic," "harmony," and "clarity" dictating by itself the overall appearance of the church, including its painted mural decorations. All these ideas would be adopted by Romanian art historiography, including a lack of interest in who built these churches and for whom. The lack of interest was reinforced by the fact that many churches' ktetors were unproblematic, as they were great figures of the historical pantheon.

The study of local architecture by Viennese art historians and architects was also needed as a means to modernize the provinces, because including local elements in the newly designed buildings meant inventing a modern national architecture. Loyalty to the Empire did not exclude the assertion of cultural distinctiveness. On the contrary, in the attempt to downplay secessionist tensions, Vienna encouraged the development of regional and local identities whose existence was guaranteed by belonging to the Empire, and which were expected to reject contrary loyalties. Architects had the civilizing mission of identifying and academically adopting the "true" local traditions, in order to place those backward provinces on the map of contemporary Europe, where all modern nations studied and valued their traditions.[90] Hlávka was interested in the local architecture of Bucovina because he was commissioned to build the ensemble hosting the seat of the Greek-Orthodox Metropolitan of Bucovina and Dalmatia (1864–1883) in Czernowitz (Chernivtsi), the province's capital, and the Catholic-Armenian church in the same town. Although he had seen and written about local architecture, in designing the complex in Czernowitz he instead employed Theophil von Hansen's version of neo-Byzantine, mixing it with neo-Gothic details and using polychrome roof tiles.[91] Hlávka called the style of the churches he described in his article "*moldauisch-byzantinisch*"; however, he did not call the new style he created "Bucovinian."

90 Matthew Rampley, *The Vienna School of Art History: Empire and the Politics of Scholarship, 1847–1918* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013).

91 Starting at the beginning of the nineteenth century, polychrome roof tiles were widely used all over Europe, especially in Austria-Hungary. One of the most important disseminators of polychrome roof tiles was Friedrich Schmidt, the chief architect of the restoration of St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, with whom Hlávka collaborated on the construction of a few parish churches. See Dragan Damjanović, "Polychrome Roof Tiles and National Style in Nineteenth-Century Croatia," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 70 (2011): 466–491. All medieval churches in Bucovina restored by the representative of the Central Commission in Vienna were decorated with polychrome roof tiles.

FIGURE 6.5 *Karl Romstorfer, The church in Bosanci (1908), https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d4/Biserica_Sf%C3%A2ntul_Gheorghe_din_Bosanci.jpg.*

His experiments with a possible national style for Bucovina did not have immediate consequences, but he succeeded in raising interest in local medieval architecture. Karl Adolph Romstorfer, a professor at the State School for Applied Arts since 1873, undertook massive restoration activities between 1890 and 1910. He reported regularly to the Central Commission for Monuments in Vienna, and his works were frequently quoted by Romanian scholars.[92] In 1908 Romstrorfer designed a new church for the village of Bosanci using as a model a typical monastery church from the era of Ştefan cel Mare. When he wrote about this church, Karl Romstorfer referred to Hlavka as his "predecessor," considering himself Hlavka's successor in the attempt to revive the *moldauisch-byzantinisch* style, and describing the results of their attempts as the creation of the "national style" Bucovina needed.[93] If the writings of Hlavka and

92 He wrote the first scholarly studies regarding the funeral church of Ştefan cel Mare and of his capital city, Suceava.

93 Karl Romstorfer, "Die Griechisch-orientalische pfarkirche in Bossancze," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (1908): 118–127.

Romstorfer had a major impact in the study of medieval art in Moldova, their designs went virtually unnoticed by the architects in Romania.

Bulgaria

In 1892, Bulgaria organized its first international fair on the model of the Universal Exhibitions, the Agricultural and Trade Fair in Plovdiv. Plovdiv was the former capital of Eastern Rumelia, which had been recently incorporated into Bulgaria. And as Mary Neuburger shows, the exhibition had a highly symbolic significance because it was organized, at least in part, to display the complete unification of the new province with the principality, aiming to demonstrate the same legitimacy to expand into the neighboring territories.[94] The effort to exhibit the Bulgarian-ness of Plovdiv and Eastern Rumelia could have included architecture—between the mid-nineteenth century and World War I, these kinds of exhibitions were occasions for displaying national or ethnic distinctiveness, including in architecture. Often the question of national distinctiveness in architecture was triggered by the participation in or the organization of such exhibitions, especially when different countries were assigned to different pavilions and the architecture of their pavilions needed to represent the country they hosted.[95] Therefore, the 1892 exhibition in Plovdiv could have been an opportunity to create examples of (ephemeral) architecture that would have been identified as "Bulgarian." Even if this did not happen—the exhibition was not mentioned or remembered as an experimental ground for the national style—some of its pavilions demonstrate that local architecture was beginning to be viewed as a possible source for modern architecture. Some of the forty-five pavilions, including the monumental entrance gate, had a striking Ottoman look that was recognized as such in specialized foreign publications.[96] Indeed, it would have been difficult

94 Mary Neuburger, "Fair Encounters: Bulgaria and the 'West' at International Exhibitions from Plovdiv to St. Louis," *Slavic Review* 69 (2010): 547–570.

95 This was especially the case in Universal Exhibitions such as the one held in 1873 in Vienna, where Austro-Hungary displayed "model villages" representative of all the provinces in the Empire. For the same occasion, the Ottoman Empire presented a book that theorized and codified, for the first time, an "Ottoman order." Smaller exhibitions, like the one in Prague (1891) or the subsequent one in Budapest (1896), also triggered discussions around architectural distinctiveness and the ability of architecture to represent the nation.

96 The large pavilions of Austria and Hungary were not designed for this exhibition; they had been used in previous exhibitions in Prague and Timişoara.

for the architects[97] of these pavilions to design something "Bulgarian," since there was not yet a "Bulgarian style." However, choosing "Ottoman motifs and decorations"[98] seems strange for an exhibition that was also meant to show Bulgaria's de facto (if not yet de jure) independence from the Ottoman Empire and which displayed, among other things, the painting of Anton Piotrowski that represented the massacre in Batak. Mary Neuburger suggests that this self-Orientalization should be understood in connection with the efforts to demonstrate Bulgaria's Westernization, and not in opposition to them, as a marketing strategy: "If there is something that attracts a considerable number of foreigners, it is their curiosity to see the Orient and so the peculiarities of our life. Why not satisfy their curiosity?"[99] Though this option for "Ottoman motifs" seems legitimate for the organizers whose voices were heard via the exhibition's official catalog, we do not know how local architects related to it.[100] However, marketing Bulgaria's architectural past as Oriental would again be an issue at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900—if modernization meant building in Western styles, in official contexts such as exhibitions, tradition seems instead to be conceptualized as "Oriental." But this Bulgarian self-Orientalization was not theorized and was countered by the more authoritative version in architects' writings, which imagined Bulgarian architectural tradition to be Byzantine.[101] The pavilions representing various cities at the exhibition in Plovdiv did not have Orientalizing features: the pavilion of Sliven was neoclassical, while an annex of the pavilion of Pazardzhik was a replica of local vernacular architecture (a low house with large eaves and a *kobilitsa*, a curved pediment above the entrance, whose shape would become one of the main indicators of Bulgarian-ness in architecture[102]). The most interesting

97 The architect of the pavilions was the Swiss Henri Mayer; the architect of Plovdiv, Josef Schnitter, was also involved; the ground plan of the exhibition park was designed by Lucien Chevallaz.

98 F.B., "Die Bauten der ersten bulgarischen Ausstellung in Philippopel," *Zeitschrift des Österreichischen Ingenieur- und Architekten-Vereines* 44 (1892): 466–467.

99 *Nasheto părvo izlozhenie* 7 (1892): 2, quoted in M. Neuburger, "Fair Encounters," 557.

100 In any case, a few years later, on the occasion of the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900, the architect Anton Tornyov would object to identifying Ottoman references on Bulgaria's pavilion.

101 However, interest in Ottoman heritage resurfaced mostly during the interwar period, when Ottoman residential architecture on the territory of Bulgaria was nationalized and imbued with specificity.

102 The *kobilitsa* was a kind of curved cornice, like the ones decorating houses in Plovdiv. See especially Anton Tornyov, *Arhitekturni motivi iz Bălgariya* (Sofia: Pechatnitsa na armeyskiya voenno-izdatelski fond, 1925).

example was the pavilion of Sofia, designed by Friedrich Grünanger, one of the creators of the Bulgarian national style, who gave the pavilion the appearance of a church with the main facade crowned by a large *kobilitsa*.

The issue of inventing a national style in Bulgarian architecture appeared explicitly for the first time in 1894, when one of the first Bulgarian-trained architects, Yanaki Shamardzhiev, asserted that the funeral monument dedicated to Alexander Battemberg, the first prince of modern Bulgaria, needed to be built in a "Byzantine style, because our national style is the Byzantine."[103] It is not completely clear what he meant by this Byzantine style, but considering his later writings and how the term was used by subsequent Bulgarian architects, and also considering how it was used in Serbian literature in the same period, it seems plausible that Shamardzhiev meant both (post-)medieval architecture (the Byzantine architecture of the Byzantine Empire and the Byzantine and post-Byzantine architecture built on the territory of Bulgaria) and contemporary architecture. In a text from 1904, Shamarzhiev explicitly connects the Byzantine style with Eastern Christianity: because the Bulgarians were converted to Christianity by the Byzantine Empire, the medieval Bulgarians adopted this style and preserved it for their churches.[104] To overlap Byzantine architecture conceptualized as a style with formal characteristics with Byzantine architecture conceptualized as the architecture of the Orthodox world would be, as in the case of Romania, an effective strategy for ignoring the Ottoman context. Placing the architecture built under the Ottomans in continuity with Byzantine traditions and downplaying the value and importance of Ottoman architecture on the territory of Bulgaria, Shamardzhiev was able to trace an interrupted tradition, which he called "Bulgarian-Byzantine" and which could be adopted by contemporary architects.

However, Shamardzhiev encountered difficulties when exemplifying such a tradition, mostly because Bulgarian architectural patrimony was still in the making, and few examples had been studied or even mentioned. Shamardzhiev divided the architecture on the territory of Bulgaria into three periods: the "purely Byzantine" architecture built before the Ottoman conquest, the architecture built under Ottoman rule, and the architecture built during the Revival period. He wrote little about "purely Byzantine" architecture (such as the churches in Nesebăr or the church in Boyana) and did not present it

103 Yanaki Shamardzhiev, "Nadgrobna kapela na pokoyniya Knyaz Aleksandăr I," *Spisanie na BIAD* (1894): 93.

104 "It is in this style that our churches and monasteries are built, even to this day." Yanaki Shamardzhiev [J. Chamardjieff], *L'Architecture en Bulgarie* (Sofia: Imprimerie de la Cour, 1904), 5.

as a possible source for modern interpretations, probably because it did not seem to have any features that would make it "Bulgarian." He supposed that the Bulgarian rulers of the First Bulgarian Empire, who fought the Byzantine Empire, could have built monumental structures in their capitals, but the architecture in these capitals (Pliska and Preslav) could not yet be studied, as excavation reports were published only later.[105] Shamardzhiev interpreted architecture built on the territory of Bulgaria under Ottoman rule as continuing the Byzantine tradition in two distinct ways: Islamic architecture was an inferior version of Byzantine architecture[106] (a view he shared with most historiographers of Islamic architecture, based on the use of domes in both architectural traditions[107]), while Orthodox monasteries borrowed from their Byzantine models in a subversive way, as part of a centuries-long effort to maintain Bulgarian identity through religion.[108] Both ideas would play a role in

105 Although Konstantin Jireček and the Škorpil brothers mentioned the ruins of Pliska in 1884 and 1897, the excavations began only in 1899, carried out by a team of Russian archaeologists led by Fiodor Uspenskii and Karel Škorpil, and the archaeological report was published only in 1905. See Konstantin Jireček, *Cesty po Bulharsku* (Prague: Nákladem Matice České, 1888), 639–641; Karel Škorpil and Hermenegild Škorpil, *Mogili* (Plovdiv: Pchela, 1898), 163. See also Florin Curta, "With Brotherly Love: The Czech Beginnings of Medieval Archaeology in Bulgaria and Ukraine," *Manufacturing Middle Ages: Entangled Histories of Medievalism in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Patrick Geary and Gábor Klaniczay (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 377–396.

106 "Only after they were installed in the country did they begin to build their own mosques in a special style, close to the Byzantine one. [. . .] Under Turkish domination, the building of monumental edifices stopped; only a few mosques and fountains were built. Massive buildings were rarely constructed." Shamardzhiev, *L'Architecture en Bulgarie*, 8.

107 Robert Nelson, "The Map of Art History," *Art Bulletin* 79 (1997): 28–40.

108 "As a type of construction, the monasteries recall the defensive architecture of the Middle Ages. [. . .] Like the former, they were surrounded by thick walls enclosing a spacious courtyard with a domed church, built in Byzantine style, and included rooms for the monks and for the guests, opened toward open galleries, as well as stables, shops, and wells. As the church was the principal element in the constructions of a monastery, it was built with special concern, and because the Turks did not extend the imposed architectural restrictions on monasteries, people succeeded in guarding the architectural traditions that flowered in the peninsula before the Turkish domination. The monasteries played an immense role in Bulgaria's religious and political renaissance. They were the place of refuge for all those who were unhappy with the Turkish regime; they were the place where people were free to think about and act toward the cause of the liberation of the country. During the great celebrations, the inhabitants from the surrounding areas came to visit the monasteries, and to accommodate these guests, each monastery had a large number of rooms open to the galleries, arranged around a central courtyard." Shamardzhiev, *L'Architecture en Bulgarie*, 11.

subsequent Bulgarian art historiography. Considering Ottoman architecture as being of low quality and devoid of innovation helped nationalize the architecture on the territory of Bulgaria and helped interpret anything monumental as the work of Bulgarian masters; equating Orthodox architecture with Byzantine architecture helped invent an uninterrupted tradition and helped place architecture in an "post-Byzantine" context that could ignore the Ottoman one.

When trying to justify continuity, Shamardzhiev mentioned several medieval and early modern churches. However, many of his examples were constructions built only a few decades before, during the "Bulgarian Revival," such as Rila Monastery.[109] Built mostly during the nineteenth century, Rila Monastery was considered one of the best examples of the Bulgarian-Byzantine style. Its prominence was motivated in part by the fact that it played an important role during the glorious era of the "Bulgarian Revival." However, the fact that it was possible to consider a nineteenth-century building to be "local Byzantine" architecture was facilitated by the fact that historians treated Byzantine art itself as fixed in an almost atemporal medievalness. In any case, if the Byzantine tradition was followed in Bulgaria and gradually made "Bulgarian," it was only logical that the final stage of this linear process should have taken place during the period of the "Revival." Therefore, while the generation of Andreja Damianov was ignored by Serbian architects, the master builders working during the nineteenth century, especially Kolyo Ficheto, were paramount for Bulgarian historiography and were often seen as the forerunners of trained architects who supported the creation of a national style. The Bulgarian architectural tradition consisted in gradually nationalizing the Byzantine tradition. Therefore, the goal of contemporary architects was to modernize this nationalized Byzantine tradition.

Shamardzhiev's tendency to minimize the role of the Ottoman Empire in the development of Bulgarian architecture and to transform the almost five centuries of Ottoman rule into a sort of "Dark Ages" would have a long-lasting effect on Bulgarian historiography. However, his view was not the only one. In 1895, an architect going by the pen name "F" published the notes he took during a trip in Macedonia in several issues of *Deutsche Bauzeitung*.[110] His article, translated by architect Aleksi Nachev, was republished, along with the illustrations, in the journal of Bulgarian architects, *Spisanie na BIAD*.[111] The text

109 Ibid., 6–11.

110 F., "Aus Mazedonien," *Deutche Bauzeitung* 37 (1895): 233–235; *Deutche Bauzeitung* 38 (1895): 238–241; *Deutche Bauzeitung* 40 (1895): 250–253; *Deutche Bauzeitung* 41 (1895): 257–259.

111 F., "Iz Makedoniya," *Spisanie na BIAD* 6 (1895): 257–264.

mentioned churches and Byzantine tradition on several occasions, especially with regard to Ohrid. However, most of the examples and the illustrations were mosques, and the author spoke highly of everything he identified as "Turkish" architecture. *Spisanie na BIAD* may have chosen to publish such an article mainly because the trip took place in Macedonia. Nevertheless, the account portrayed a very "Turkish" Macedonia where most monumental structures were mosques and they were praised by a foreign architect—just the opposite of what Bulgarian architects were expected to find interesting in Macedonia. In subsequent years, until a team of Russian art historians conducted a study trip in Macedonia in search of its Byzantine heritage[112] (covered in the pages of the same journal), F's article remained the most detailed and extensive account of the architecture of a region that would later provide an important (and contested) part of Bulgarian heritage.

Architects' focus on the "Revival" period was further demonstrated by the plans to build a museum dedicated to it. These projects are interesting for several reasons. First, this was the first attempt at museification of a rather recent past. The museum was to be dedicated to what official Bulgarian historiography treated as a distinct period, the "Bulgarian Revival" (or "Renaissance"), which supposedly began in the second half of the eighteenth century and ended with Bulgaria's independence in 1878 and was regarded as a period of "national awakening."[113] Second, part of this museum was to include an ethnographical exhibition, and as such it was the first time that Bulgarian intellectuals intended to include the lives and works of the national heroes of the "Revival" within a larger historical narrative aimed at projecting a sense of continuity between the actions of various political actors and the material culture of the Bulgarian "*Volk*." Third, the call for projects was the first time in which an official competition was opened with the specific request of using a "Bulgarian-Byzantine style." In 1889 a group of intellectuals proposed the creation of a "Museum of the Bulgarian Revival," which was never realized. Organized in a committee named Komitet Tsar Osvoboditel, in honor of Alexander II of Russia, who helped Bulgaria gain independence during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, this group included the painter Anton Mitov and the architect Nicola Lazarov, both of whom would later call for the creation of national styles in the arts. For the construction of this museum, a call for projects was

112 This was the ethnographical expedition in 1900 headed by Nikodim Pavlovich Kondakov, who published its results in *Makedoniya. Arheologicheskoe puteshestvie* (St. Petersburg: Izdanie otdeleniya russkago yazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1909).

113 See Tchavdar Marinov and Alexander Vezenkov's contribution in volume 3 of this series (*Entangled Histories of the Balkans*).

launched in 1900, stating that it needed to be in a "Bulgarian-Byzantine style."[114] The choice to name this national style "Bulgarian-Byzantine" needs clarification, as allusions to Byzantium were not necessarily prestigious outside the architects' milieu. Official historiography tended to equate the "Byzantines" with the "Greeks," who added to the political "yoke" of the Ottomans a second "yoke" of religious and cultural domination, and against whom the heroes of the "Revival" were fighting. However, for the Bulgarian architects educated abroad, associating the national style with the Byzantine was not only prestigious but the only way to suggest how the national style should look. Architects who intended to participate in the competition apparently had difficulties understanding how this museum should look, and the organizers published a detailed explanation of what they meant by "Bulgarian-Byzantine." In order to demonstrate the "local forms" that could be used in inventing a national style for this museum, the organizers mentioned both buildings on the territory of Bulgaria[115] and various works of art collected in museums and libraries in Sofia and Plovdiv.[116] This demonstrates the fact that they understood national identity as embedded in decoration and not in structure, and the fact that they regarded ornaments as transferable from one medium to another (for example, in suggesting the use of decorative elements taken from manuscripts or jewels).[117] Including vernacular architecture in their suggestions, the organizers of this competition drew attention to what, in the interwar period, would become the privileged source of the Bulgarian national style,[118] challenging

114 The requirements are quoted *in Spisanie na BIAD* 3–4 (1901): 75.

115 The examples of architecture mentioned in their text developed in chronological order, from medieval churches (Nesebăr, Bachkovo, Boyana) to churches built in the first half of the nineteenth century (Pazardzhik, Plovdiv, Teteven), as well as "the survey of monuments located in Macedonia recently published by the Russian professor Milyukov." In addition to church architecture, vernacular architecture was also mentioned as a possible source of inspiration (the "old houses in Tărnovo, Arbanasi [. . .] etc., and other towns that preserved their old parts"). "Kăm chl. 3 ot programata za konkursa po văzdiganieto Muzey na bălgarskoto văzrazhdane," reprinted in *Periodichesko spisanie* (1902): 230–232.

116 "National products and creations such as jewelry, iconostasis, and manuscripts": "Kăm chl. 3 ot programata," 231.

117 Concerning ornaments' transferability between national styles, see Irina Cărăbaş, "Decoraţie şi specific. Ion Mincu şi cultura decoraţiei în secolul al XIX-lea," *Ion Mincu. O perspectivă regionalistă şi o abordare a inserţiei locale*, eds. Ada Hajdu, Irina Cărăbaş, Cosmin Minea, and Vlad Bedros (forthcoming).

118 Ljubinka Stoilova, "Tărseniya na natsionalna identichnost mezhdu dvete svetovni voyni v arhitekturata na Sofiya," *Sofiya i neynite obrazi. Materiali ot simpozium c mezhdunarodno uchastie*, ed. Dobrina Zheleva-Martins (Sofia: SUB, 2004), 84–98.

the focus on the religious architecture that marked the *Hanzenatika* style mentioned in the first part of this chapter. An important part of the guidelines for contestants was the reference to Ottoman architecture, proving that at least some Bulgarian architects recognized some aspects of Ottoman heritage as valuable: "There is no doubt that in some Bulgarian architectural creations, one can encounter the influence of Muslim art. However, this does not affect them in a negative way but instead helps give the building local color and originality, if, of course, the artist managed to mix this element with the others in the right proportion, and in appropriate places."[119]

Seven architects participated in the competition, and their projects and the jury's protocols were published, but a second contest was scheduled, as the jury was not fully satisfied by any of the designs. Only one project was judged to be in a "Bulgarian-Byzantine style." All others were seen as either "too Byzantine" or having too few "local motifs" or too many "Moorish decorations." Yet none of these labels was further clarified.[120] However, the controversy around the designs for this museum opened a discussion on what the "national Bulgarian style" would be and what sources the architects needed to use in its creation. Therefore, the projects for the "Museum of the Bulgarian Revival," even if they failed, demonstrated the difficulties in nationalizing the past and in creating a national historiography. They were especially relevant as, until the interwar period, the national style starting from local constructive forms was almost always the subject of debates and controversies.

The most influential voice in these discussions was Anton Tornyov, who identified the local constructive elements to be used for the creation of the national style in the church and residential architecture from the "Revival" period. But Tornyov was more of a theoretician, as few projects in this version of the national Bulgarian style were realized before World War I. Most of them were designed by Anton Tornyov (his exhibition pavilion, which represented Bulgaria in the International Exhibition in Liège in 1905 and Milan in 1906, and two private houses).[121] Two other important designs, Naum Torbov's City Casino (built in 1910 in Sofia, disappeared in World War II[122]) and the Royal

119 "Kăm chl. 3 ot programata": 231.

120 See Dabko Usta-Genchov, "Po povod na vătreshniya konkurs za muzeya na Bălgarskoto văzrazhdane," *Periodichesko spisanie* (1900): 688–694; Anton Tornyov, "Invaliden dom v stolitsata," *Spisanie na BIAD* (1900): 24–25; Anton Mitov, "Obyasnitelna zapiska kăm chl. 3 ot programata za konkursa po văzdiganeto Muzey na bălgarskoto văzrazhdane," *Periodichesko spisanie* (1902): 232–233.

121 For Tornyov's activity, see Ganchev, Doychinov, and Stoyanov, *Bălgariya 1900*, 229–230.

122 Ibid., 228–229.

FIGURE 6.6 *Nicola Lazarov, The Royal Palace in Vrana (1912–1914), https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/53/Vrana_2.JPG.*

Palace in Vrana (built by Nicola Lazarov in 1912–1914[123]) are somewhat similar to Romanian contemporary experiments. Naum Torbov had studied architecture with Ion Mincu in Bucharest, but this might not necessarily have been the only explanation for the similarities. The fact that architects had the same kind of education and used the same historical references, which belonged to a shared heritage, could also have led them to arrive at similar solutions, even though their goal was to create distinctiveness and accentuate difference.

In Need of Tradition

The national architectural styles in Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia are comparable in terms of the strategies involved in nationalizing and patrimonializing the architectural past. From country to country, the rhetoric used to instill appreciation of tradition and suggest tradition's possible usage in the present evolved around the same concepts and was quite similar. Some architects and architectural historians tried to address objections that local tradition would not

123 Ibid., 167–171.

be respectable enough and stressed that the past needed to be conceived as a source for building the present and projecting the future. In 1872, the Romanian Alexandru Odobescu encouraged his contemporaries to "study the remnants, no matter how small, of the artistic productions from the past, and make them the origin of a great art!"[124] Likewise, in 1896, Mihail Valtrović and Dragutin Milutinović explained that "no nation can understand its mission in the present without a sound awareness of its past. [...] Studying these [monuments] is the basic condition for the [...] national progress."[125] At times, the need to invent a national style was explicitly promoted as a way to synchronize with the West, and not as the logical, "natural" development of local architecture. "This is how things are done in Russia, in Serbia, and in Romania and other countries, and this is what we should do: Germany and France support their national styles, they develop and improve them; this is what we should do with the style that we can find in our country and that we inherited from our ancestors," wrote the Bulgarian Yanaki Shamardzhiev in 1894.[126] Shamardzhiev made clear an aspect other architects only suggested: being modern meant having a tradition, and tradition was invented by modernity.

The search for suitable models from the past was comparable to similar searches in Central Europe. In the Balkans, no architects showed the same degree of "self-Orientalization" that Ödön Lechner showed in his version of a Hungarian national style.[127] However, a certain degree of self-Orientalization was present, even if it had a different scope and different connotations, as efforts here were focused instead on "Occidentalizing" the architecture.[128]

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124 Alexandru Odobescu, "Artele din România, în periodul preistoric. Conferinţă rostită la Ateneul român, la 17 decembrie 1872," *Opere complete*, vol. 3 (Bucharest: Institutul de Arte Grafice Minerva, 1908), 173–174.

125 Mihail Valtrović and Dragutin Milutinović, *Valtrović i Milutinović: Dokumenti II* (Belgrade: Istorijski muzej Srbije, 2007), 213, quoted in Ignjatović, "Byzantium Evolutionized," 264–265.

126 Shamardzhiev, "Nadgrobna kapela," 93.

127 János Gerle, "Hungarian Architecture from 1900 to 1918," in *The Architecture of Historic Hungary*, eds. Dora Wiebenson and József Sisa (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998). In 1906 Lechner wrote: "The cradle of the Hungarian culture is in the Orient and anything that could be considered national archetype [...] has its origins in the Orient." Ödön Lechner, *Művészet* (1906), quoted in Katalin Gellér, "English Sources of Hungarian Style," in *Britain and Hungary: Contacts in Architecture and Design during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century*, ed. Gyula Ernyey (Budapest: Hungarian University of Craft and Design, 1999), 17.

128 For phenomena of self-Orientalization in the Balkans, see Carmen Popescu, "Balkan Orientalism: Geopolitics and Self-Invention: A Reading of the Romanian Case," *Centropa* 2 (2008): 172–185; "Le paradoxe de l'orientalisme balkanique: entre géopolitique et quêtes

With regard to treating vernacular architecture as a source for inventing a national style, the Hungarian style was invented starting from the patrimony of a specific region (Kalotaszeg/Ţara Călatei in Transylvania), which was considered the repository of Hungarian distinctiveness in all respects (language, folk literature, music, and costume).[129] Mythicizing a certain region was also a strategy used in the Balkan countries to varying degrees (Wallachia [where the Brancovan monasteries were located] in the case of Romania; Macedonia in the case of Bulgaria; Kosovo/Kosova in the case of Serbia). In Poland, certain architectural elements were selected as specifically and exclusively Polish,[130] a situation that was similar to considering the *kobilitsa* as specifically Bulgarian and the trilobed arch as specifically Romanian,[131] and identifying these elements on older buildings or using them on new ones were considered indicators of distinctiveness. However, the mechanisms for appropriating a shared heritage were different from Poland, where the disputes over the "Polish" versus "German" identity of medieval and Renaissance architecture had different political stakes.[132]

The political and social contexts were similar in the Balkans and different than those in Central Europe, even if the new national states were successors of multiethnic empires. In the Balkans, the first generations of architects were trained abroad, and the faculties of architecture and specialized publications were founded in the same period. The state played a comparable role;

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identitaires," *L'orientalisme architectural entre imaginaires et savoir*, eds. Nabila Oulebsir and Mercedes Volait (Paris: Picard, 2009), 253–272.

129 For example, József Huszka, *Magyar díszítési motívumok a Székelyföldön* (Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe: Különnyomat a székely nemzeti múzeum Értesítőjéből, 1883) and especially József Huszka and Károly Fiók, *A székely ház* (Budapest: Pesti Könyvnyomda-Részvénytársaság, 1895).

130 These were some features of Gothic architecture on the territory of Poland, such as the double arches on the western facade or a type of Renaissance attic. Arnold Bartetzky, "History Revised: National Style and National Heritage in Polish Architecture and Monument Protection before and after World War II," in *Heritage, Ideology, and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe: Contested Pasts, Contested Presents*, ed. Matthew Rampley (Woodbridge and Suffolk: Boydell, 2012), 93–113.

131 Nicolae Ghica-Budeşti, "Evoluţia arhitecturii în Muntenia şi Oltenia. IV. Noul stil din veacul al XVIII-lea," *Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice* 29 (1936): 1–193.

132 David Crowley, *National Style and Nation-State: Design in Poland from the Vernacular Revival to the International Style* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992); Malgorzata Omilanowska, "Searching for a National Style in Polish Architecture at the End of the 19th and the Beginning of the 20th Century," in *Art and the National Dream: The Search for Vernacular Expression in Turn-of-the-Century Design*, ed. Nicola Gordon Bowe (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993): 99–116.

the states were the most active developers of architecture and used it as a means of representing modernization and Europeanization, either including or not including in this effort the representation of national distinctiveness. Therefore, unlike in Hungary, Poland, or Finland, the national styles in the Balkans and the interest in vernacular architecture were not developed as an opposition to the high art promoted in art academies. Initially, following foreign models was an integral part of nationalist discourses, justifying the claim that the given nation belonged to Europe and not to the Orient. In the 1820s and 1830s, many churches were built in Serbia in a late Baroque style, showing not only the will to Europeanize the appearance of towns and villages and negate the Ottoman heritage but also the connection with the Slavs in the Habsburg Empire, whose churches employed the same style.[133] Especially relevant was the case of Romania, where building in the styles promoted by the École des Beaux-Arts was a way of stressing the connection between Romania and France, based on the Latin origin of their languages and on their Roman "ancestors."[134] When the first generations of architects trained abroad returned to their countries, the cities and towns had already been changed by an increasing number of buildings built by foreign architects in Western styles. Foreign architects and Western styles were preferred both by private clients and in official competitions involving large expenditures. The states, however, were not especially interested in stylistic issues, focusing instead on the buildings' functionality and on keeping construction costs low. Moreover, when the question of architectural distinctiveness and national styles became publicly debated, architects in Romania and Bulgaria had to rebut opinions that nothing specifically Romanian or Bulgarian ever existed or was possible and desirable to produce. They found it hard to support their arguments with concrete examples, as patrimonialization was still in its early stages. Thus in all three countries, the architects trying to promote national styles were working in similar contexts and faced similar obstacles.

But what made national styles in the Balkans strikingly similar, even in their appearance, was their recourse to shared heritages: (post-)Byzantine church architecture and Ottoman residential architecture.

133 Bratislav Pantelić, "Designing Identities: Reshaping the Balkans in the First Two Centuries; The Case of Serbia," *Journal of Design History* 20 (2007): 131–144.

134 Shona Kallestrup, "Romanian 'National Style' and the 1906 Bucharest Jubilee Exhibition," *Journal of Design History* 15 (2002): 147–162.

CHAPTER 7

The "Balkan House": Interpretations and Symbolic Appropriations of the Ottoman-Era Vernacular Architecture in the Balkans

Tchavdar Marinov

Introduction

This study deals with scholarly interpretations of a specific vernacular house type that is widespread in the Balkan countries and which has been traditionally labeled either an "Ottoman house" or a "Balkan house." The focus here is on the construction of national interpretations of the vernacular residential architecture in question, meaning symbolic appropriations or "nationalizations" of a common cultural heritage from the Ottoman era. Although dedicated to a certain form of traditional architecture, this text does not present the outcome of research in the field of art/architectural history or ethnography. Instead, it takes a critical meta-position with regard to these disciplines, which have been crucial in the development of a certain idea of "national heritage" and, in particular, of "national architecture" in the post-Ottoman Balkans. Thus the present work invites a critical rethinking of the national approaches in the broader field of traditional culture and material heritage that still seem so authoritative in the Balkan countries. It also provides a comparative analysis of the development of Balkan theories of vernacular architecture regarding not only their connections to the broader European context but also the mutual influences among them. This work is thus intended to shed light on deeper transformations of the cultural contexts within Balkan countries since the late nineteenth century and on phenomena that have rarely been studied together and in terms of their interactions. At the same time, on a more general level, it demonstrates certain limitations of the conceptual framework of the "Balkan area" inherent in contemporary Balkan studies and in popular references to "Balkan culture," where the Ottoman legacy often seems to be marginalized.

The nationalist "invention of traditions" is by no means a new topic of study. The construction of cultural heritage and its relationship to nation-building, and in general the political and other uses of heritage, have also been a subject of scholarly discussion. Although the nation-state has traditionally taken the role of codifier and main "protector" of cultural heritage as "national" wealth,

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a number of studies also emphasize the importance of actors at different levels with whom state institutions have constantly interacted. The activity of individual scholars often preceded and actually made possible the creation of specialized institutions, and one must also take into account local enthusiasts and associations, as well as supranational institutions dealing with "world heritage" in the second half of the twentieth century.[1] Culture is essentialized in the production of national heritage: while certain traditions, places, and forms of material heritage such as architecture could have incorporated various cultural traces and influences that did not relate to modern categories of nationalism, institutions and authorities tended to offer a simple and easily recognizable image of the past, interpreted in narrow national terms.

Although it often provides simple answers to complex problems, the "heritagization" of vernacular architecture is itself a complex process and cannot be comprehensively discussed here. The present work analyzes the national(ist) interpretations that made possible and accompanied this process in the Balkans. Proposed by architects, art historians, ethnographers, and other specialists, these interpretations concerned a largely shared vernacular house type. So far, there is no satisfactory comparative presentation of the Balkan nationalisms in architecture with regard to their reference to this house type and the interconnections between them. Most writings engage critically with one national theory or another and simply indicate that it is a common Ottoman-era Balkan residential architecture that was claimed as representatively national in the rest of the Balkan countries as well. Due to linguistic limitations or simply a failure to seriously consider more than one national context, authors also erroneously conclude that the house type in question was invested with the same national meaning in all cases—for instance, in Serbia to the same extent as in the Republic of Macedonia or Greece.[2] At the same time, the fact that the same traditional house was portrayed as national or was linked to important ideological stakes and articulations of national interests makes the case of the Balkan or Ottoman house a fascinating phenomenon deserving more thorough research.

Though often-complicated national genealogies of this vernacular idiom have been developed, the bias of national interpretations is obvious even at

1 See the recent issue of the *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 19 (2014) on "Heritage Production in Turkey," http://ejts.revues.org/4930 (accessed January 20, 2015).

2 For instance, Nikelina Bineri, "'Negative' Cultural Heritage: Destruction or Conservation?" in *1st International Conference on Architecture & Urban Design 19–21 April 2012*, Epoka University, Department of Architecture, 538, http://ecs.epoka.edu.al/index.php/icaud/icaud2012/paper/view/113/197 (accessed January 20, 2015).

FIGURE 7.1 *The House of Robev in Ohrid* (*the Republic of Macedonia*) (*1860s*).

first glance. In the eighteenth- through early-twentieth-century Balkans, members of diverse linguistic and religious communities, increasingly antagonistic as a result of the diffusion of modern ideas of nationalism, used to order, build, and inhabit the same type of traditional house. Turks, Greeks, Slavs (Bulgarians and Slav Macedonians, Serbs and Bosniaks), Albanians, Balkan Vlachs/Aromanians, and (to a much lesser extent) Romanians, as well as Jews and Armenians, demonstrated amazingly similar tastes in terms of architectural form and plan, building technology and materials, interior decoration, and, in some cases, exterior decoration. In many cases, they also continued building in the same traditional way even after the end of Ottoman rule. Yet despite this obvious fact, over the past century, this house type received a number of national designations, such as "Turkish house," "[Northern] Greek house," "Bulgarian [National] Revival house," and "Macedonian traditional house" (both in the regional and national sense).

This common "Balkan house," a vernacular type of residential building from the Ottoman era, could be described in the following general way.[3] Typically,

3 For a general description: Maurice Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types: A Comparative Study in Interaction with Neighboring Cultures," *Muqarnas* 15 (1998): 119–120; Carel Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House: Collective Visions of Home* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 21–33. See also Lefteris Sigalos, "Ottoman, Greek or European? Reflections of Identity in House Architecture from Mid-Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries," in

it has two stories, sometimes more. The roof is four-sided and normally not sharp. It is covered with round tiles (in the Balkans often known as "Turkish tiles") or slates, and the eaves are usually deep and overhanging. The foundations are shallow: with certain exceptions, the Ottoman or Balkan house has no basement. The ground floor is typically built of stone or rubble, and it has few openings. It was a service level used for storage and daily economic activities—and for keeping domestic animals. By contrast, the upper part is of light timber-framed construction, with a regular row—or even two rows—of relatively large windows. The frames of the construction are filled with wattle and earth or bricks; the exterior is normally plastered from the outside. The plaster might be painted in different colors and, in some cases, there is also vegetal and other painted decoration. Yet in Istanbul and in the Black Sea area, most of the houses were given wooden cladding, which replaced the earlier practice of plastering the façade.

Perhaps the most salient characteristic of this house type is the protruding upper rooms or stories called in (Ottoman) Turkish *çıkma, cumba*, or *şahnişin*, supported by wooden beams that are either visible or plastered over. The upper level was reserved for family life and receiving guests. It consists of a number of square or rectangular rooms called *oda*, which are not designed with a special function in mind. Functional spaces such as kitchens, baths, and toilets are placed either on the ground level or in outbuildings. Only in richer residences are there representative spaces for formal receptions called *baş odası* ("main room"), *misafir odası* ("guest room"), or *divanhane* (in the Western Balkans). Balkan scholars of Christian origin almost invariably claim that their "national" houses differ from the Turkish/Muslim ones, insofar as these are articulated into *selamlık* (quarters for guest receptions) and *harem*(*lik*) (for women and family life). Yet this is again only the case for large upper-class mansions.[4] These were often known as *konak*. Other characteristic kinds of ruling-class residences included the *köşk* ([suburban] villas in gardens) and the *yalı* (waterfront mansions, particularly along the Bosphorus in Istanbul).

In terms of the plan of the house, the rooms are normally arranged around a central connecting space, which is either open, such as a veranda opening onto a courtyard/garden, or closed. The open plan is considered to be the earlier one, and the veranda with wooden pillars supporting the roof is usually called *hayat* (from "life" in Turkish). Its name may vary: in some places, it is known

Constructions of Greek Past: Identity and Historical Consciousness from Antiquity to the Present, ed. Hero Hokwerda (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2003), 219.

4 Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 138. Conversely, similar functional division could be observed in rich Christian houses.

FIGURE 7.2 *A house in Berat* (*Albania*). *See the typical veranda oriented toward the courtyard. It is referred to by different Ottoman terms in the Balkans* (hayat, çardak, *etc.*). PHOTO: TORI OSEKU, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/berat#/media/file:muzeu_etnografik_ne_berat.jpg.

as *çardak*, and it can include raised belvedere platforms referred to (again) as *köşk*. In certain urban houses, there was a trend to enclose the veranda with windowpanes known in the Balkans as *camlık*. The closed plan came later; it is articulated around a central hall called *sofa*. Furniture, especially mobile furniture, is sparse: rooms have low, cushioned bench seating (*sedir* or *minder, minderlik*, etc.) built along the windowed walls, walled cupboards (*musandıra*) with small niches, and a conical fireplace (*ocak*). In rich houses, plastered segments of the walls are decorated with painted ornaments and frescos of land- and townscapes (such as images of Istanbul), and the ceilings have wood-carved decoration into geometrical or more elaborate forms articulated around a central focal point.

Apart from building technology, structure, plan, room conception, and appearance, it is important to take into account the specific relationship of this house type to the urban setting. Indeed, the problematic of the Ottoman or Balkan house goes together with that of the "Ottoman city" and/or "Balkan city," the discussion of which exceeds the scope of the present study.[5] Here it is enough to say that the house type in question normally exists in an urban tissue of low density. Characteristically, the house has a specific articulation between the street and a courtyard or a garden, dictated by certain imperatives

5 On this set of problems, see Alexander Vezenkov's contribution to the present volume.

FIGURE 7.3 *The House of Georgios Mavros* (*Schwarz*) *in Ambelakia* (*Greece*) (*1798*).
Wall paintings and built-in wardrobes (musandıra).

of privacy of family life. With the exception of later urban examples, houses do not form a continuous line of façades with a direct relationship to the street, as they do in Western Europe.

This description already raises several sets of more general conceptual questions. These concern: 1) typology: the very definition of "house type" and to what extent one can refer to a particular type in this case; 2) the definition of "vernacular"; 3) the dichotomy urban vs. rural, given that an urban setting has already been mentioned. Does this type of vernacular architecture, if there is one, cover exclusively urban houses? 4) the proper naming of the type: is it really the "Balkan house" or, rather, the "Ottoman house"?

Any detailed analysis of the first two sets of questions goes beyond the scope of this work. Indeed, as we will see, the Balkan or Ottoman house type has a large variety of regional and socially determined subtypes. To a certain extent, these might call into question the idea of a unique "house type." Moreover, the area of Balkan or Ottoman vernacular architecture is not completely isolated from neighboring kinds of traditional residential buildings—for instance, from those in the Caucasus, the Near East, the Greek archipelago, or the Adriatic area. In many cases, there were transitional or mixed patterns of residential architecture. However, there is a certain general unity that gives the Ottoman or Balkan house idiom a distinctive character and makes it almost impossible to mistake for another one, despite its wide range of variants. As the architect

Maurice Cerasi emphasizes in his seminal study on the formation of the "Ottoman house," although this house's main elements can be found in house types of neighboring areas, "their combination and their impact on townscape and urban culture are unique," at least to a certain geographical core area.[6]

The concept of "vernacular" is used here as more or less equivalent to "traditional," "folk," or "popular architecture," but each of these terms could be legitimately disputed. In general, vernacular architecture is presented as "architecture without architects": it is the work of builders without professional training (often the house owners themselves), with a low level of planning, repeating the already established conceptions and forms, which change only slowly. It is distinguished from "cultured"/"high"/"official" architecture, which is based on a certain project and often has a monumental character. Official architecture is the work of masters who can be named, and it is also commissioned by known persons, normally members of the ruling elite and state officials.[7] However, this distinction leaves a series of problems unresolved. For instance, vernacular architecture was also often the work of masters whose names are known, and it was also sometimes commissioned by important personalities. Thus it is not "anonymous," although it has often been labeled as such.[8] In many cases, traditional master builders were impressive *virtuosi* whose architectural skills did not differ much from those of professional architects. Moreover, they consciously imitated and applied certain "high" architectural conceptions, which in the Balkans were adopted most often through the Ottoman capital.

This fact poses the crucial question of the relationship between vernacular and official architecture—in this case, between the Balkan "folk" houses and the residential buildings of the Ottoman ruling class, including the palatial architecture of Istanbul. As we will see, Balkan scholars traditionally insisted

6 Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 117. For a discussion of the concept of "house type" and the process of unification of the Ottoman house type, see ibid., 132–140, 148.

7 Yannis Kizis, "'Episimi' kai 'paradosiaki' architektoniki: i epirroi tou kentrou stin eparchia tis Othomanikis autokratorias," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 6: *Thessalia-Ipeiros*, ed. Dimitris Philippidis (Athens: Melissa, 1988), 269.

8 For a critique of the distinction between vernacular and official architecture: Charalambos Bouras, "The Approach to Vernacular Architecture: A General Introduction," in *Greek Traditional Architecture*, vol. 1: *Eastern Aegean, Sporades, Ionian Islands*, ed. Dimitri Philippides (Athens: Melissa, 1983), 21; Dimitris Philippides, *Greek Design and Decoration: Three Centuries of Architectural Style* (Athens: Melissa, 1999), 52–56; Yannis Kizis, "Paradosiaki architektoniki tis Thessalias," in *Valkaniki paradosiaki architektoniki. Praktika diethnous synedriou Thessaloniki, 7–10 Noemvriou 1997*, ed. Vasiliki Tourptsoglou-Stefanidou (Thessaloniki: APTH, 1999), 145–160.

on a one-way relationship; they interpreted complex examples of residential architecture as having evolved unilaterally from simple peasant dwellings. The scholars' strategic interest was to prove that the vernacular houses in their countries were autochthonous in character. The problem was that the mansions of the Ottoman "invaders" and the urban architecture of members of other nations looked too similar to these houses. Hence they sought to reduce foreign residential architecture to a refined version of what was thought to be the most authentically national heritage: peasant houses.

By contrast, critically minded specialists have indicated that the real relationship was actually the other way round: peasant dwellings and poor semi-urban houses adopted concepts and tastes typical of rich mansions. Thus in reality, Balkan vernacular architecture represented a naive reflection of official architecture, particularly of palaces of Ottoman rulers. However, the relationship in this case seems to be more complex. As Cerasi stresses, "[f]olk architecture does not necessarily precede court architecture nor is the opposite true."[9] In the case of Ottoman and Balkan architecture, it is extremely difficult to evaluate to what extent palatial architecture was decisive in the formation of the vernacular house type and to what extent it was itself a refined and complex selection of elements coming from different local traditions.

The concept of "traditional architecture" should also be used with caution: "traditions" are not static, nor is the vernacular house type. In some parts of the Balkans, the Ottoman or Balkan house type replaced earlier building patterns only in the nineteenth century. Vernacular architecture was changing. Its development was witnessed by local or foreign observers and, in some cases, was even documented in pictures and photographs. In turn, throughout the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, Ottoman house architecture underwent "de-Ottomanization" as a result of the introduction of Western techniques and features of academic styles (Classicism, Baroque, etc.). The big protruding volumes of traditional buildings were gradually refined in the form of Western-like oriel windows; Neo-Classical pediments and Baroque/Rococo-inspired curved lines disrupted the previous rectilinear shapes. Bulgarian specialists are especially fond of these "European" influences in the vernacular architecture of their country, known as *alafranga* ("*à la française*") motifs. However, the process was more complex in this case as well. Westernization first affected the court architecture of the Ottoman capital, and when it arrived in the province, it had already been filtered through Istanbul. The "Baroque" features seen in places such as nineteenth-century Plovdiv in Thrace or in eighteenth-century Ambelakia in Thessaly were largely an adoption of

9 Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 136.

the "Ottoman Baroque."[10] It may sound paradoxical at first, but the more Westernized a province became, the more Ottoman it became.[11]

These transformations almost exclusively concerned urban architecture. Indeed, the spread of the Balkan or Ottoman house type was, from the outset, closely related to the development of urban society in the Balkans after the seventeenth century—to the fact that "middle- and upper-class townspeople gained a larger role in the urban economy and life."[12] The part of society that was attracted to the way of life of the Ottoman ruling class and had the status and means to afford representative residential architecture fashioned after the "high" palatial models was the urban class—particularly the famous "conquering" Balkan Orthodox merchant described by Traian Stoianovich.[13] Not surprisingly, many parts of the Balkans (such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia) contain old urban architecture of the Balkan or Ottoman type that is clearly different from the surrounding peasant house types. Nevertheless, in the Ottoman context, there were a number of rich "villages" with an important merchant class and thriving proto-industrial production with completely Ottoman or Balkan house architecture. Conversely, poor towns and urban neighborhoods did not differ much from villages.[14] In geographical areas such as Macedonia, the peasant house type is quite Balkan/Ottoman, and it is especially difficult to distinguish it from the urban house type.

So far, the terms "Balkan" and "Ottoman" have been used here interchangeably, which may create the impression of a certain terminological haziness.

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10 As confirmed by the Greek specialist Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki mas klironomia* (Thessaloniki: n.d., 1983), 115–121. The question of the channels through which Western (as well as Eastern) influences penetrated in Ottoman architecture, including in the vernacular house type, is certainly complex: see Maurice Cerasi, "The Commerce of Forms and Types between the West and the Ottoman East from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre* 1–2 (1997–1999): 114–133.

11 See Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 140, quoting the Bulgarian scholar Mihaila Staynova.

12 Ibid., 116, also 129, 137, 140.

13 Traian Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant," *Journal of Economic History* 20 (1960): 234–313. See Bouras, "The Approach to Vernacular Architecture," 24, on the importance of the Greek element in the eighteenth century.

14 Of course, here one must not include cases in which a once-prosperous town later shrank to a village either as a result of the decay of traditional technologies and commercial routes (e.g., Ambelakia in Thessaly) or of the expulsion of the local population following wars and changes of boundaries—or as a result of both, as in the case of Melnik in Bulgaria (still officially a town but actually smaller than an average village).

In fact, neither of these terms seems satisfactory for the geographical description and historical attribution of the house type in question. To begin with, the vernacular "Balkan house" is by no means typical only of the Balkans: it is common in western and northern Anatolia as well. The map of its core area provided by Cerasi[15] defines as the eastern limit of its diffusion a line starting at the northeastern corner of contemporary Turkey, passing south of Ankara and finishing at the Mediterranean littoral to the east of Antalya. Some of the greatest examples of "Balkan" house architecture are (or were) located in Anatolian towns such as Birgi (western Asia Minor) and even as far east as Trabzon. At the same time, the core area does not cover all Balkan countries. Bosnia, Serbia (minus Vojvodina), Albania, Macedonia, and Bulgaria are part of the area, but it does not include the central and southern territories of continental Greece, most of the Greek islands, the Adriatic coast, or even northwestern Bulgaria.

In fact, the real situation is too complex to be put on a map. As already stated, the Balkan or Ottoman house was not typical of rural areas of some Balkan countries that are otherwise part of Cerasi's core area thanks to their urban heritage. Even in the heart of this area—geographical Macedonia, Thrace, and the European and Asian shores of the Sea of Marmara and of the Black Sea—peasants often inhabited simple huts. Conversely, as we will see, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Balkan/Ottoman house type characterized urban centers in Central and Southern Greece as well, and also in Wallachia—including the Romanian capital, Bucharest. If these are not part of the core area, it is probably because their Ottoman-era vernacular architecture was almost completely eliminated as a result of the "Europeanizing" efforts of nation-states created in the nineteenth century. At the same time, "Balkan" features entered the architecture of places such as Crete and Rhodes—although these had quite different vernacular traditions and stone architecture influenced by the West (Venice, the Order of Hospitallers) and the Arabian Eastern Mediterranean, Ottoman domination "Balkanized" their vernacular idiom. Moreover, "Balkan" elements appeared in the architecture of neighboring geographical areas that were ruled by the Ottoman Empire in various periods: the Caucasus, the Near East, and of course Cyprus, whose architectural heritage and its interpretation is beyond the scope of the present work.[16] A quite "Balkan" idiom can even be found across the Black Sea—in Bahchisaray/Bağçasaray, the former capital of the Crimean Tatar Khanate, which was a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.

15 Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 129.

16 On Cyprus, see, for instance, Eufrosyni Rizopoulou-Igoumenidou, "I paradosiaki architektoniki tis Kyprou (18os–20os aionas)," in *Valkaniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, 325–349.

All that suggests that the Balkan vernacular house type is in fact Ottoman. It developed visibly under Ottoman influence in places that had different building traditions and that were even detached from the architectural core area. However, the term "Ottoman house type," used by scholars such as Maurice Cerasi, could be also misleading. "Ottoman" could easily be perceived as equivalent to "Turkish," but here it is instead a phenomenon that cannot be attributed exclusively to one or another ethnic or national community. Moreover, not all urban and representative house types from the Ottoman era are "Ottoman." Houses in southern and eastern Anatolia inhabited by Turks (along with other communities) are not of "Ottoman type." Mud-brick ground-level dwellings with flat roofs characterize rural architecture there, while the old urban heritage consists of elaborate stone houses with a different layout within the local urban tissue. The latter is also quite different from its Ottoman counterpart in the Balkans and in northern and western Asia Minor. More precise terms could be devised, such as "(Ottoman) Balkan-northwestern Anatolian house," but they would be cumbersome. Thus, in the present work, the terms "Balkan house" and "Ottoman house" will be employed interchangeably, exercising the caution that the usage of both of these requires.

Although it figures even in the title of this study, the "Balkan" definition of the vernacular heritage in the Balkans and Asia Minor will be critically reexamined. As many scholars indicate, the Balkan house type has been clearly attested only since the seventeenth century—that is, only in the framework of the Ottoman Empire. For Cerasi, whatever the origin of its components was, "it is undeniable that synthesis and typological consolidation came after the seventeenth century." Yet it is an open question whether this type of house existed earlier and imposed itself throughout the Empire when non-Turkish urban communities began to prosper, or whether it was the "syncretic product of a multiethnic society from the seventeenth century onwards with the imperial court acting as a powerful catalyst."[17] Thus the emphasis on the Ottoman character of this heritage seems unable to avoid a recurring question that has been heatedly debated in both Balkan and non-Balkan scholarship: the question of origins.

As we will see, most of the Balkan national theories promoted their own "archetypes" of the Balkan house type. Specialists tended to interpret it as a continuation of medieval pre-Ottoman and even more ancient building traditions, such as Classical Greek and Roman, and even Thracian and Illyrian. Turkish scholars invented connections with the tents in which their presumed ancestors came to Anatolia from the Turkic *Urheimat* in Central Asia. Among

17 Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 116.

the most frequently cited archetypes was the "Byzantine house." Naturally, it has been especially promoted by Greek specialists, but it is also present in former Yugoslav and other Balkan interpretations. Moreover, an important stimulus in this direction came from non-Balkan scholars. In an authoritative monograph from 1902, the French archaeologist Léon de Beylié (also known as an army general in French Indochina) characterized some of the distinctive elements of the Ottoman house—particularly the volumes in projection—as a continuation of Byzantine and even more ancient architectural forms.[18] De Beylié studied the few still-standing Byzantine residential buildings (or those that were considered Byzantine), all of which are, naturally, stone- and brick-built, not timber-framed: a house in Melnik (in what is now Bulgaria's Pirin Macedonia), the medieval town of Mystras in the Peloponnesus, and the so-called Fener houses (*maisons de Phanar*) in Istanbul. The latter seem especially relevant because they are located in quarter(s) of the Byzantine and Ottoman capital, and because they have cantilevered second stories in a slight projection.

De Beylié's theory was questioned from the outset. Identifying the Fener houses as Byzantine was clearly precipitate, and there is even a problem with the dating of the Mystras houses (as well as of the one in Melnik). The Mystras architecture certainly bears Frankish and Venetian influences, while the Fener mansions actually conform to an Ottoman model.[19] As many scholars emphasize, it is extremely difficult to trace the distinctive features of the Ottoman/Balkan house back to the characteristics of the Byzantine house—if there was one Byzantine house type at all. Marked by Slavic, Arab, and other invasions, the period of the sixth through the eighth century put an end to the ancient Greco-Roman patterns of dwelling in the Byzantine Empire, such as the *peristyle* house. The character of the Byzantine city after that date has been described by a specialist of Byzantine architecture as "dramatically and irrevocably altered": there was a process of depopulation and "ruralization" of large centers, while the domestic architecture became "poorly built and of little architectural interest."[20] It would probably be hopeless to try to identify

18 Léon de Beylié, *L'Habitation byzantine. Recherches sur l'architecture civile des Byzantins et son influence en Europe* (Grenoble and Paris: Falque & Perrin / Ernest Leroux, 1902); Léon de Beylié, *L'Habitation byzantine. Les anciennes maisons de Constantinople* (*Supplément*) (Grenoble and Paris: Falque & Perrin / Ernest Leroux, 1903).

19 It is, indeed, not typical of house architecture but characterizes other kinds of civil Ottoman buildings, such as seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Istanbul *han*s (inns). See Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 125, 130.

20 Robert Ousterhout, "Secular Architecture," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 193–199. See also Simon Ellis, "Early Byzantine

the general typological and stylistic characteristics of the Byzantine house: the available archaeological and other data make any generalization difficult.[21]

Regardless of their genealogy, Balkan houses did not initially incite much enthusiasm. In the late Ottoman period, they were described as shabby, dilapidated, and a fire hazard. The latter problem was a constant preoccupation for the Ottoman authorities through the nineteenth century, when a series of decrees tried to oblige the population to build houses of stone or brick. As we will see, in the newly created Balkan "Orthodox Christian" nation-states, the same houses were initially regarded as "Turkish." They were commonly attributed to an era of alleged "barbarity" and underdevelopment whose traces the Balkan elites were trying to suppress. As a result, most of this house heritage was demolished, along with many valuable examples of the monumental Ottoman architecture. However, starting at different times, members of all Balkan nations re-evaluated the old dwellings from the Ottoman era. These even became pieces of national heritage and important identity symbols.

The present work tries to analyze the multiple logics involved in this paradoxical process as it developed in all Balkan countries. Although the result is identical—the old "Turkish" houses were symbolically appropriated and "nationalized"—there are certain differences between the national contexts that will be discussed. In some cases, the Balkan house was adopted as purely national, and the dominant interpretation jealously refused "right of ownership" to any other nation. But in other cases the mainstream theory was more inclusive and was articulated in the context of some pan-Balkan or even Mediterranean imagery. Nevertheless, even in such patterns of symbolic usage, the Balkan house was supposed to boost national identity.

In any case, the initial incentives for its reconsideration as an important national heritage came from the West. These were mediated by architectural theory and art history on the one hand and ethnography on the other. As in other disciplines, the first Balkan specialists in these fields were trained in Western and Central Europe (France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, etc.[22]).

Housing," in *Secular Buildings and the Archaeology of Everyday Life in the Byzantine Empire*, ed. Ken Dark (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004), 38; Charalambos Bouras, "Aspects of the Byzantine City: Eighth-Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki Laiou (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 497–528.

21 Lefteris Sigalos, "Middle and Late Byzantine Houses in Greece (Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries)," in *Secular Buildings and the Archaeology of Everyday Life*, 53, 56–57.

22 One must also emphasize the importance of Russia, at least in the intellectual contexts of two Balkan Slavic countries: Bulgaria and Serbia.

Moreover, foreign architects and ethnographers working in Balkan countries played an especially important role in the elaboration of theories of the architectural identity and of national architectural idioms of these countries, at least in the initial stages. Thus ironically, while Balkan nation-states quickly embraced and encouraged the idea of the creation of particular "national styles" in modern architecture (Romanian, Turkish, Serbian, Bulgarian, etc.), both this idea and its formal expression were largely "imported."

The first impetus in this respect was nineteenth-century historicism in European architecture, with its numerous "Revival"/"Neo-" styles. There the references to specific kinds of medieval architectural heritage were ultimately supplemented with a certain interest in vernacular dwellings—meaning, in the Western European context, mostly rural dwellings. This interest was articulated in different ways: initially, many European architects prized the "picturesque" character of the rural houses. Yet some architects developed a more "academic" interest in them and thus anticipated the later Modernism with their appreciation of what they saw as the vernacular dwellings' inherent "wisdom" and relationship to natural context.[23] Moreover, architectural theory gradually became entangled with ethnographic research on folk traditions as forms of continuity of "national" culture. The "simple folk" were increasingly seen as a noble incarnation of the most authentic national values. Peasant architecture, for its part, was symbolically "nationalized." It was even considered a modest continuation of historical monumental architecture—a point that we will see in Balkan cases as well.

As a result, from Spain to Russia, and from Scotland to Hungary, academically trained architects used not only motifs from medieval church and civil buildings but also folk motifs from vernacular houses in their designs in "regional" and "national" styles.[24] Fin-de-siècle international expos became an

23 For an overview: Carmen Popescu, *Le style national roumain. Construire une nation à travers l'architecture, 1881–1945* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes/Simetria, 2004), 16–18, 48–51. See also Popescu's article "Rurality as a Locus of Modernity: Romanian Inter-War Architecture" and the volume in which it appears: *Rural and Urban: Architecture between Two Cultures*, ed. Andrew Ballantyne (London and New York: Routledge, 2010).

24 See the contributions published in *Idée nationale et architecture en Europe, 1860–1919. Finlande, Hongrie, Roumanie, Catalogne*, eds. Jean-Yves Andrieux et al. (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2006); *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture; entre histoire et pratique. National and Regional in Architecture: Between History and Practice*, eds. Carmen Popescu and Ioana Teodorescu (Bucharest: Simetria, 2002). See also Carmen Popescu, "Un patrimoine de l'identité: l'architecture à l'écoute des nationalismes," *Etudes balkaniques* 12 (2005): 135–171, http://etudesbalkaniques.revues.org/102 (accessed January 20, 2015).

important stage on which every "civilized" European country was supposed to present its national traditions in architecture in the form of pavilions. In these, vernacular elements were often intertwined with historicist references. With its "secession" from established academic styles, the Art Nouveau movement only reinforced the interest in folk motifs and crafts.

The second main impetus was interwar Modernism. In its program of rational and functional architecture, related to nature and to local conditions—including local traditions—vernacular houses played a crucial role. On the one hand, they were interpreted as having intrinsically "modern" features. On the other hand, a paradoxical result was the national "rooting" of the Modernist movement itself—a movement that was supposed to have an international character.[25] Moreover, a fortunate coincidence encouraged Balkan Modernist architects to study the vernacular heritage of their countries. In 1911, the great master of Modernism, Le Corbusier, visited the Balkans. He was impressed by the local folk houses and arts: he left a number of sketches and descriptions of the urban layout and architecture of towns such as (Veliko) Tărnovo in Bulgaria.[26]

Le Corbusier's visit to these places was part of his journey "in the Orient." Here the reference is telling: Orientalism also played a crucial role in the positive reappraisal of Balkan vernacular architecture.[27] As we will see, Orientalist

25 The Turkish-American scholar Sibel Bozdoğan lucidly explains the logic behind this ironic turn: "Buildings of the common folk were seen as perfect expressions of utility, practicality, simplicity, constructional honesty, and conformity to local materials, climate, and resources: that is, the same basic qualities and criteria that modern architecture sought after. Modern architecture, after all, had emerged as a critical discourse by those wishing to replace the fixed stylistic norms of classicism and academism with an empirical approach to design that had to be, by definition, responsive to local conditions. Form would not be an *a priori* stylistic choice but a consequence of rational considerations of program, site, soil, climate, budget, and materials, just as it had always been with vernacular buildings or folk architecture. Therefore, in its true spirit, modern architecture could not possibly be an 'international style': integral to its very conception was a profound contextualist and regionalist sensitivity." Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2001), 255.

26 Le Corbusier, *Le Voyage d'Orient* (Paris: Forces Vives, 1966); Le Corbusier, *Voyage d'Orient. Carnets* (Milan and Paris: Electa / Fondation Le Corbusier, 1987).

27 On this problem, see Carmen Popescu, "Le paradoxe de l'orientalisme balkanique: entre géopolitique et quêtes identitaires. Lecture à travers le cas roumain," in *L'Orientalisme architectural entre imaginaires et savoirs*, eds. Nabila Oulebsir and Mercedes Volait (Paris: Picard, 2009), 253–272, http://inha.revues.org/4910 (accessed January 20, 2015).

motifs were involved in diverse ways both in the *fin-de-siècle* construction of "national styles" throughout the region and in the Modernist theories. In some cases, the Orientalist point of view was overtly displayed. In other cases, although it was implicit in the discovery of local architectural traditions, Orientalism was not declared in the discourse of architects and other specialists. In most Balkan countries, the symbolic appropriation of the Balkan or Ottoman house type went along with a number of Orientalist clichés concerning Ottoman architecture in general. The latter was regularly exoticized as "too Oriental" or neglected as too derivative of Byzantine and other traditions. In this context, the "national house" was distinguished from the "Turkish house," and it was idealized in many ways. But in turn, Turkish architects applied the same Orientalist perspective vis-à-vis other architectural traditions.

Typical motifs from the Balkan house were used by Bulgarian, Serbian, Greek, Turkish, Romanian, and other architects in the design of a variety of buildings. These were private houses and royal or state-leader residences (as rulers were supposed to inhabit recognizably "national" houses, allegedly close to those of the common folk), representative public buildings, and tourist resorts. In the present work, architectural practice will receive less attention, as the main focus will be on the discourse of literature about national architectural history. The presentation will start with national contexts where ideological claims concerning Balkan or Ottoman house architecture were less pronounced. This relative lack of interest could be the result of the geographical marginality of the respective countries with regard to the Ottoman core area and/or of specific ideological stakes. Nevertheless, even in their case, the Balkan house type played a certain role in some articulations of national tradition and heritage. Next will be presented countries whose scholars have generally admitted the Balkan or Ottoman character of the same house type but nevertheless tended to appropriate it as a piece of national architecture. Finally, special attention will be devoted to intellectual evolutions in countries that developed strong claims of "ownership" regarding the Balkan vernacular house type.

Balkan House—National or Not? The Case of Romania

Generally, in Romanian architectural terminology, the Balkan or Ottoman house is, without many reservations, referred to as "Balkan" and, in some cases, as "Ottoman" (*casa balcanică/otomană*). Thus there has not been a serious and long-lasting attempt to define it as a "typical Romanian" house. The main reason is that Romania is marginal to the Balkan-Anatolian architectural space:

most of its territory is characterized by quite different forms of vernacular architecture.[28] Transylvania and Banat, which joined the Romanian state only in 1918, have visibly "Central European" architectural heritage that one can find in neighboring Hungary, Vojvodina, etc. Some areas, particularly the province of Maramureș to the north, have a peculiar "Carpathian" wooden architecture, similar to that in neighboring parts of Ukraine or Slovakia. The regions of Wallachia and Moldavia with their subdivisions (Oltenia, Bucovina, etc.)—are characterized by various regional house types that differ from Balkan architecture, although they may share a number of traits thereof in their plans and even specific Ottoman terms denoting elements of the house (e.g., *odaie*, "room," from Turkish *oda*; [*h*]*ogeac*, "fireplace," from Turkish *ocak*). Examples of these regional varieties have been displayed since the interwar period at the open-air Village Museum in Bucharest, created in 1936 by the sociologist Dimitrie Gusti.

Nowhere in this museum is there a more or less typical Balkan or Ottoman house. There is nevertheless one region in Romania where Balkan/Ottoman features have deeply marked the local vernacular dwellings: Dobrudja (in Romanian, *Dobrogea*), the strip of land between the lower Danube River and the Black Sea. Indeed, Dobrudjan houses are, in most cases, ground-floor constructions of quite modest dimensions and plans. Yet their construction techniques, elements, patterns of decoration, and house terminology are obviously Balkan. As one would expect, this is the only part of Romania that was under direct Ottoman domination. Moreover, that direct domination there lasted longer than the indirect, but efficient, Ottoman control of the two historical Romanian Principalities: Wallachia and Moldavia, which were governed in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century by Phanariot "Greek" families. Dobrudja became Romanian in 1878, the year of the creation of a Bulgarian Principality that was actually granted the southern part of the region (the Bulgarian *Dobrudzha*). The latter was also annexed by Romania after the Balkan Wars (in 1913) and, again, between 1918 and 1940.[29] Dobrudja was a particularly mixed region ethnically: Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Gagauz (Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians), Lipovans (Russian-speakers from the

28 See Georgette Stoica, *Roumanie* (Athens: Melissa, 1992). The book is part of the series *Architecture traditionnelle des Balkans*.

29 On Romanian-Bulgarian conflict over Dobrudja, see Constantin Iordachi's chapter in this volume. On the Phanariot rule of Wallachia and Moldavia, see his contribution to the first volume of the series: *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. 1: *National Ideologies and Language Policies*, eds. Roumen Daskalov and Tchavdar Marinov (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 67–148.

sect of the "Old Believers"), and even Germans lived there.[30] Yet at the time Dobrudja became part of Romania, it had a largely Muslim (Turkish and Tatar) character. Even today the presence of Islam sharply distinguishes Dobrudja from the rest of Romania.

However, as already stated, Balkan or Ottoman influences could be found in the heart of modern Romania as well, in Wallachia and in Moldavia. In the nineteenth century, especially after the unification of the two principalities in 1859, Ottoman traits were deliberately erased from the local townscape, as the Romanian national elites embraced Western European cultural models and tried to get rid of anything that might be considered Turkish or Oriental. In the sphere of architecture, this brought about, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the fashion of an eclectic academic style inspired by the Parisian Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Yet as some engravings from the first half of the nineteenth century attest, on the eve of this "Europeanization," the houses of the Wallachian capital, Bucharest, featured the same protruding upper stories (called *sacnaşi* or *cicma*, from Turkish *şahnişin* and *çıkma*) and other elements found in the Balkans and northwestern Anatolia. Even today, one can see a quite Balkan house (although with considerable academic influences) in the center of Bucharest—the Casa Melik, built in the second half of the eighteenth century but remodeled in the early nineteenth and owned for a long time by an Armenian family.

Other constructions in the historical center of the Romanian capital also display Balkan or Ottoman architectural features. This is especially true of *han*-type buildings (*han*, meaning "inn," is another Turkish loanword used in contemporary Romanian as well as in the other Balkan languages): e.g., the Hanul lui Manuc, an inn built in 1808 and initially owned by a wealthy Armenian, and the Hanul cu Tei (1833). These are in fact the remnants of the late-Ottoman-era controlled and post-Ottoman "cosmopolitan" Bucharest, whose urban and merchant class was quite often of non-Romanian origin: apart from Armenians, there was a significant presence of Greeks, Balkan Vlachs (Aromanians), Jews, Bulgarians, Serbs, Albanians, and others. It should also be noted that Balkan master builders—from Epirus, Macedonia, and Bulgaria—were working in the Wallachian/Romanian capital and towns throughout the nineteenth century. They certainly introduced elements of their Balkan and Ottoman architectural know-how in their buildings, while at the same time, they probably got acquainted with European academic trends as a result of

30 It must be noted that the houses of different settlers in Dobrudja, such as the Lipovans and the Germans, had often distinctive non-Balkan characteristics coming from their places of origin.

their stay in Romania. While the activity of these masters has been abundantly documented by scholars from their native Balkan countries,[31] Romanian specialists have traditionally been quite uninterested in the question about the creators of the vernacular architecture in Romania.

A particular problem outside the scope of this essay concerns the Ottoman influences in the palace and church architecture of Wallachia and Moldavia until the early nineteenth century. As a matter of fact, in Orthodox religious architecture as well, these have local traditions that considerably distinguish them from the post-Byzantine architecture in the Balkans. In Wallachia, this is the "Brâncovenesc style," named after the Wallachian prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (late seventeenth–early eighteenth century), with its distinctive trilobed arches and rich stone carving. In Moldavia, Gothic features characterize local architecture from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, while Western Classicism and Baroque took root in the eighteenth century through Russian and Polish mediation.[32] However, the Brâncovenesc Palace in Potlogi and the church of Fundenii Doamnei in Bucharest, both built by the end of the seventeenth century, have a stucco decoration of quite an Oriental/Ottoman inspiration. Similar stucco is to be found in a house from the same period located in the village of Arbanasi in northern Bulgaria, where Wallachian rulers used to reside. The Ottoman influence was not limited to Wallachia: the decoration of churches and other buildings from the Phanariot period in the city of Iaşi, the historical capital of Moldavia, bear elements of the eclectic "Ottoman Baroque" or "Rococo."[33]

In this context, it is worth briefly presenting Romanian architects' stance on the vernacular architectural heritage and, in particular, on the Balkan or the Ottoman elements in it. In fact, the 1880s were marked not only by the official imposition of Beaux-Arts academism but also by initial instances of a parallel trend in Romanian professional architecture that was certainly more original. Somewhat earlier, influential intellectuals united in the Junimea association rejected what they called "forms without substance"—or the blind

31 For Greek master builders, e.g.: Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki. Symvoli eis tin meletin tis ellinikis oikias* (Thessaloniki: Ververidis-Polychronidis, 1971). For Bulgarian master builders: Nikolay Tuleshkov, *Arhitekturnoto izkustvo na starite bălgari*, vols. 2–3 (Sofia: Akademichno izdatelstvo, Arh & Art, 2006).

32 See Popescu, *Le style national roumain*, 27–30; Ada Ştefănuţ (Hajdu), *Arhitectură şi proiect naţional. Stilul naţional românesc* (Bucharest: Noi, 2010), 18–21.

33 Sorin Iftimi, "Turnul bisericii Sfântul Spiridon din Iaşi, un monument între două lumi," in *Oraşul din spaţiul românesc între Orient şi Occident*, ed. Laurenţiu Rădvan (Iaşi: Editura Universităţii, 2007), 165–181.

imitation of foreign (Western European, specifically French) cultural models.[34] This was the beginning of a long intellectual quest for "national specificity" (*specificul național*) that was expressed in diverse ways in Romanian culture in the decades to come. At the same time, the idea of codifying "national" and "regional" styles in contemporary architectural design was becoming popular in the European context, including in France, where most Romanian architects received their education.

The result of these intellectual and artistic trends was the emergence of a Romanian "national style" in architecture (*stilul românesc, stilul național*)—certainly the most successfully diffused compared to similar phenomena in modern Balkan architectures. It had different articulations that evolved over time, yet the buildings created in this idiom are unmistakable with their trilobed arched openings; open verandas (called *foișor*) with relatively sharp, sometimes pyramid, roofing; and carved decoration. National style was supposed to replace the banal imitation of French academic models, although it was made possible by the schooling that Romanian specialists received in French and other art academies. This style began with the works of the architect Ion Mincu, commonly considered its founding father.[35] Its main source of inspiration was the medieval church architecture of Romania (chiefly the "Brâncovenesc style" of Wallachia), as well as vernacular secular architecture. The latter covered the few palaces of Wallachian princes from the seventeenth and eighteenth century (such as the Brâncovenesc Palace at Mogoşoaia and the one at Potlogi) as well as a series of isolated fortified mansions of the ruling elite (the boyars) concentrated mainly in the region of Oltenia.

These are known under the term *culă*—the same Ottoman term (*kule*) that is found almost unchanged all over the Balkans (e.g., *kulla* in Albanian). On Romanian territory, these fortified mansions were built mostly in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, during a troubled period of Austro-Turkish wars, separatism within the Ottoman Empire and banditry on the other side of the Danube, which often ravaged the Oltenian-Wallachian

34 On these debates in Romania and similar trends in other national contexts in the Balkans, see Diana Mishkova and Roumen Daskalov, "'Forms without Substance': Debates on the Transfer of Western Models to the Balkans," in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. 2: *Transfers of Political Ideologies and Institutions*, eds. Roumen Daskalov and Diana Mishkova (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), 1–97.

35 On Mincu and the creation of the Romanian national style: Popescu, *Le style national roumain*, 47–131; Ştefănuţ (Hajdu), *Arhitectură şi proiect naţional*, 22–41. A number of studies on diverse forms of the national style in Romania are published in *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture*. See also Ada Hajdu's contribution to the present volume.

plain. As with the other Balkan cases, in Romania these fortified mansions have often been portrayed as proof of a long historical continuity of fortification architecture: some Romanian scholars interpreted the *culă* as a continuation of Roman and/or Thraco-Dacian types of fortification.[36]

Traditional peasant houses were the other kind of vernacular secular architecture that Romanian architects used to create a national style. In general, the Balkan type of house was not an important factor: the Romanian peasant dwellings look quite different than the houses with protruding *sacnaşi* that once existed in Bucharest. However, elements of Ottoman architecture, particularly house architecture, did find their way into designs made by Romanian architects. Especially by the turn of the twentieth century, the use of these elements was intertwined with a certain Orientalism that existed implicitly in their works but was generally not recognized by Romanian architects. In different forms, Ottoman inspiration was present in Romanian architecture by the turn of the twentieth century and also in the interwar period.

As architectural historian Carmen Popescu argues, in the first articulations of Romanian national style—those from the 1880s to the 1900s—Oriental references were "nationalized" and assimilated to the vernacular heritage.[37] These were amalgamated with distinctively Wallachian and Moldavian, as well as Venetian and Byzantine, elements.[38] In fact, the European fashion of Orientalism in architecture was the price to pay for the creation of a distinctive architectural identity, different from the Western academic models. Ion Mincu was probably influenced by descriptions of Ottoman art and by modern constructions in "Neo-Ottoman" style. In some cases, the arches of his buildings are conspicuously sharpened like Oriental pointed arches, and the roofing is of "Turkish" type. Moreover, in some of his projects Mincu used the volumes in projection of the Balkan houses—the *sacnaşi*—although he "Occidentalized" them in the form of oriel windows.[39] Even more Orientalist

36 For a description and discussion of this type of dwelling: Silvia Ileana Costiuc, "The Culas in Oltenia," in *Actas del Séptimo Congreso Nacional de Historia de la Construcción, Santiago 26–29 octubre 2011*, eds. Santiago Huerta et al. (Madrid: Instituto Juan de Herrera, 2011), 283–294; Ioan Godea, *Culele din România. Tezaur de arhitectură europeană* (Timişoara: Editura de Vest, 2006), 12–26. Although they share certain specificities of the Balkan fortified dwellings, the varieties of *culă* have a distinctive appearance with their plastered exterior and arched veranda at the top (the *foişor*).

37 See Popescu, "Le paradoxe de l'orientalisme balkanique."

38 These were also often identified as "Oriental" by Western scholars: see Ada Hajdu's chapter in this volume.

39 Popescu, "Le paradoxe de l'orientalisme balkanique." On Orientalism in Romanian and Balkan architecture, see also Popescu, "Un patrimoine de l'identité."

was the architectural idiom of Ion Socolescu, another early promoter of the national style. Sometimes his design was so strikingly Orientalized that his works were rejected in the interwar period by Romanian architects as not really Romanian and even as "Arabian."

As these cases show, Ottoman and Balkan vernacular architecture, although marginal in the Romanian context, was not ignored by Romanian specialists. This architecture received some attention on a number of occasions. One such occasion was the study of the traditions of the Balkan Vlach populations—particularly the Aromanians (Macedo-Romanians), officially treated in Romania as part of the "Romanians south of the Danube" (*românii de la sud de Dunăre*). In the interwar period, the Kingdom of Romania invited parts of these populations to settle in the country, while the increasing scholarly interest in them was connected to the general development of Balkan studies in Romania.[40] As a result, Romanian ethnographical works also felt the need to cover traditional Aromanian architecture, which was predominantly of Balkan type. Romania's most famous historian, Nicolae Iorga, gave some attention to the Balkan Vlach house—which he treated as a "Mediterranean house"—in a work on Romanian folk art.[41]

In general, in the interwar period, architectural design granted Balkan vernacular idiom a more prominent place than the excessively decorative forms of the turn-of-the-century design. The reasons for this unexpected orientation of some Romanian architects towards the Balkan forms are certainly complex. On the one hand, specialists were conscious of the fact that the Balkan house, and Balkan or Ottoman vernacular architecture in general, existed in Romanian towns, particularly in Bucharest, prior to the Europeanization trend of the nineteenth century, and that this heritage was marginalized in the national style. In the interwar period, the latter was the subject of criticism, and the Romanian architects searched for ways to renew the Romanian architectural identity. As Carmen Popescu shows, the revival of the Balkan vernacular house forms was understood as a restoration of a lost part of Romanian culture.[42] In at least one case, this revival took literal forms: in 1935, as part of the Luna Bucureștilor festival, the architect Octav Doicescu designed an "old quarter" (*Cartierul Vechi*) in Bucharest's Carol Park. Displaying Bucharest "as it used to be," the exposition resurrected those houses with protruding *sacnași*

40 See Diana Mishkova's contribution to the present volume.

41 See Nicolae Iorga, *L'art populaire en Roumanie: son caractère, ses rapports et son origine* (Paris: Gamber, 1923).

42 Popescu, "Rurality as a Locus of Modernity," 155–156.

that are visible on drawings from the beginning of the nineteenth century and that present a visibly Ottoman Bucharest.[43]

On the other hand, one must take into account the authority exercised in the field by the great masters of international Modernism—most notably by Le Corbusier, who was intrigued by the simplicity, the geometric forms, and the horizontal articulation of the volumes of the Balkan house during his travel in the region in 1911. The "discovery" of the Balkan house was also connected with growing international interest in traditional "Mediterranean architecture." The Balkan component of Romanian heritage was, in a peculiar way, converted into the imagery of the "Mediterranean spirit"—reflecting the search for the roots of European culture that was then underway among European artists. Through the Balkan reference, Romania was portrayed as participating in a larger age-old civilizational space, invested with ancient Greek, Roman, and Byzantine cultural heritage.[44]

The geographical context in which Romanian interwar Modernism turned most notably to the Balkan vernacular idiom was not chosen at random: this is the formerly Bulgarian Southern Dobrudja (*Cadrilaterul*), which was annexed by Romania after the Balkan Wars. It is, more precisely, a series of residential buildings concentrated in Balcic (Balchik), at the Black Sea coast. In the interwar period, this small town became a fashionable place for the Romanian political and cultural elite, thanks to the fact that it hosted the favorite seaside residence of the charismatic Queen Mary of Romania.[45] Traditionally, Dobrudja, and particularly Southern Dobrudja, where Balcic is situated, figured in the Romanian national imagination as "the Orient" of Romania. A salient "Oriental" feature—a minaret—found its place at the top of Queen Mary's mansion, which otherwise largely imitated the appearance of a Balkan house. The building was designed in the 1920s by Emil Güneş, an architect of Turkish origin. The Orientalist imagery of the residence of Queen Mary was supplemented by other elements, such as a "Turkish bath" and a "Garden of Allah."

In the 1930s, again in Balcic, the architect Henrieta Delavrancea-Gibory created more than twenty private villas clearly inspired by the Balkan house (Villa "Vânturile, valurile," 1934; Villa Pillat, 1935, etc.). Yet unlike the Queen's mansion, the buildings designed by Delavrancea-Gibory—as well as the Villa

43 See the photos at http://lunabucurestilor.blogspot.com/2010/07/luna-bucurestilor-1935-cartierul-vechi_22.html (accessed January 20, 2015).

44 Popescu, "Le paradoxe de l'orientalisme balkanique."

45 On Balcic's place in Romanian culture and national imagination, see Lucian Boia, *Balcic. Micul paradis al României Mari* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2014).

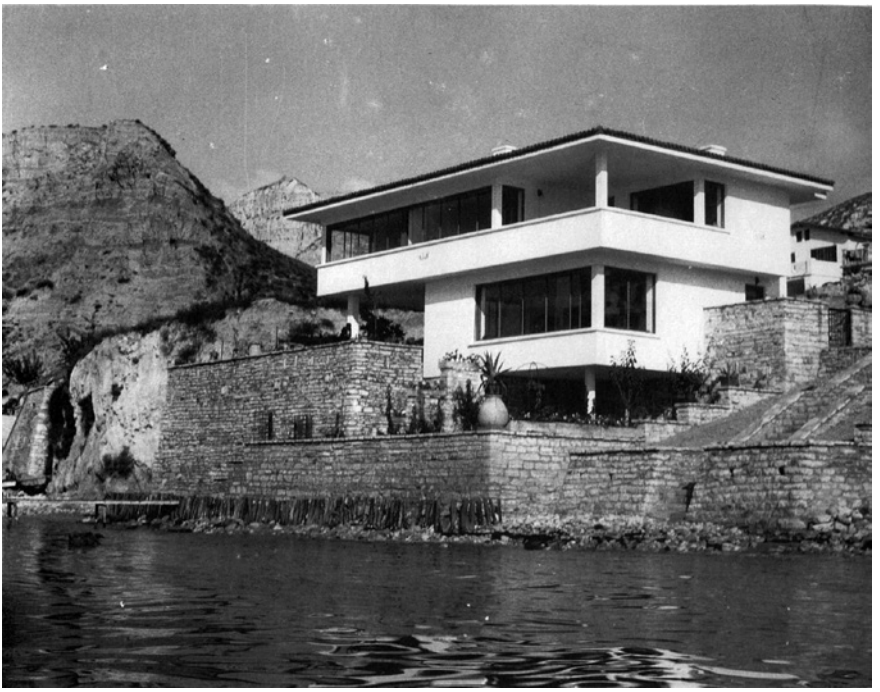

FIGURE 7.4 *Henrieta Delavrancea-Gibory, Casa Constantiniu in Balcic (1935).* SOURCE: RĂZVAN LUSCOV, https://picasaweb.google.com/100320370007069231444/HenrietaDelavranceaRiriCaseleDeLaBalcic.

Sanda (1934) by her colleague Paul Smărăndescu—did not represent pastiches of vernacular idiom but original transposition of Modernist and functionalist principles in the vernacular "spirit of the place" (such as protruding volumes, horizontal articulation of the façade, and whitewashed walls). To a large extent, this was also the Romanian version of the Mediterranean identity so fashionable in interwar European design: the "Mediterranean roots" of the Romanians were situated precisely in Balkan and Ottoman Dobrudja, the only Romanian seacoast, whose antiquity was attested to by a number of Ancient Greek colonies and by the symbolically important presence of the Roman poet Ovid, once exiled in Tomis (Constanța). Thus the Romanian "Orient" also appeared to be the Romanian "Mediterranean."[46]

46 On Delavrancea-Gibory and Romanian architecture in Balcic, see Popescu, *Le style national roumain*, 311–316; Popescu, "Le paradoxe de l'orientalisme balkanique"; Boia, *Balcic*, 121–131.

As a result, Balkan vernacular architecture was assimilated to Romanian architecture: traditionally marginalized and even rejected in the Romanian national style, the Balkan house became, to some extent, national. By the end of her career, Delavrancea-Gibory asserted that her houses actually had a "Romanian look."[47] Thus Modernist design of Balkan inspiration was not necessarily related to some regional Dobrudjan "spirit of the place": at the same time as Delavrancea and Smărăndescu in Balcic, their colleague Octav Doicescu developed a somewhat more picturesque and nature-related version of Balkan-inspired Modernism in a series of residential buildings in Bucharest.

After the Modernist villas of the 1930s, Balkan or Ottoman architectural idiom found its way into an interesting project concerning the old city center of Bucharest. It was launched after World War II, under the communist regime, by the architect Constantin Joja, who was also an important theorist of vernacular architecture. The years of the project are important: 1967–1968. This is a period of "return" to the "authentic values" of the nation under the rule of Nicolae Ceaușescu, which followed an initial Sovietization of Romanian architecture and a relative break with both national style and Modernist design.[48]

Constantin Joja's project envisaged "re-rooting" the historical center of Bucharest (the Curtea Veche-Lipscani area) in its historical traditions, mostly by redecorating existing buildings in the spirit of "Romanian urban architecture" (*arhitectura urbană românească*).[49] In fact, the project was about to endow the city center with an impressively Balkan or Ottoman appearance: Joja pointed to the urban architecture from the eighteenth century, that is, from the Phanariot period, as the example to follow. The architect was particularly inspired by the enclosed galleries—the verandas protected by a "wall" of window panes—called *geamlâc* in Romanian (from the Turkish *camlık*).[50] This element is found in buildings such as the Hanul cu Tei or the Casa Melik, whose restoration was led by Joja. Among the factors that enabled Joja's turn

47 Popescu, *Le style national roumain*, 315.

48 As early as 1967, Ceauşescu exhorted the architects to value the "specificity" of the Romanian people: Popescu, "Un patrimoine de l'identité." On post-Stalinist "rehabilitation" of the vernacular architecture in Romania: Augustin Ioan, "La réhabilitation idéologique post-stalinienne de l'architecture vernaculaire," *Etudes balkaniques* 12 (2005): 187–189.

49 See his theoretical work: Constantin Joja, *Sensuri şi valori regăsite* (Bucharest: Editura Eminescu, 1981).

50 Joja's project is extensively presented by Emanuela Grama, "Impenetrable Plans and Porous Expertise: Building a Socialist Bucharest, Reconstructing Its Past (1953–1968)," *EUI Working Paper MWP* 2012/23.

to this architectural heritage was perhaps the fact that he was of Balkan Vlach (Aromanian) origin.

Yet Joja rejected any suggestions that the historical center might be Balkan vernacular architecture and hence that following Balkan or Ottoman models might be called for in the process of restoration. Joja tried to prove the purely Romanian character of the heritage in question. Thus he asserted the "originality" of the enclosed verandas, which, he said, "do not appear anywhere in the Balkans."[51] His conclusion was that "Romanian urban architecture" had neither Occidental nor Oriental influences. Moreover, he imagined the enclosed verandas from the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century to be a precursor of the modern glass façades: the "modernity" of this element was especially emphasized in his writings. Thus, simultaneously with the idea of re-rooting Bucharest in its urban tradition, Joja's project appealed to a specific form of Modernism resurrected in Romania, just as in the other Eastern European communist countries, after an initial period of architectural Stalinization. We will see in other Balkan contexts the same blend of traditionalism and Modernism: it was made possible by the idea (shared by many Modernist architects) that the essential elements of modern architecture are to be found in the vernacular dwellings.

Constantin Joja's project is certainly the most salient case in Romania of symbolic appropriation of the secular Balkan or Ottoman architecture as "purely national." Even if some buildings in Bucharest's city center were partially "Ottomanized" through their restoration under Joja's supervision, the project was opposed by his colleagues and was ultimately rejected. In fact, its failure reveals a certain distinctive feature in how "national" architecture was imagined in Romania since the period of Mincu. As already stated, Romanian national style found its main sources of inspiration both in the old religious architecture of Wallachia and Moldavia and in the vernacular residential architecture, meaning princely and boyar mansions as well as peasant houses. Urban architecture was thus not present in the Romanian imagery of national style. Since the late nineteenth century, the intellectual quest for "national specificity" was focused on the "authenticity" of the Romanian village, while the towns were often resented as too cosmopolitan, alien, not sufficiently Romanian.[52]

51 Grama, "Impenetrable Plans and Porous Expertise," 11. In fact, one can find similar enclosed verandas in Bulgaria, Albania, or Greece—even in houses of the Athenian Plaka.

52 See Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001), 35–36. More in Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 202, 302 ff.

Constantin Joja's project, by contrast, placed a high value on urban heritage, which he felt his fellow architects had unfairly neglected as "Balkan." In a way, his project was also not that idiosyncratic in the context of the previous assimilation, by 1930s architects, of the Balkan house as a Romanian house. As noted above, Octav Doicescu even resurrected Old Bucharest in Carol Park in 1935.

Joja's attempt was nevertheless doomed, given the already structured perception of the "genuinely Romanian" heritage, in which the Ottoman or Balkan vernacular idiom had a marginal place and the old urban architecture was—despite the aforementioned exceptions—not recognized as Romanian. As we will see, this overall exclusion of the vernacular urban architecture sets the Romanian case apart in the regional context.

National Identity as a Balkan Identity: The Balkan House in Serbia

As in Romania, in Serbia there is no mainstream and broadly shared idea about the "typically national" character of the Balkan house type. To a large extent—again like Romania—this can be attributed to the actual diversity of traditional house types both inside Serbia and in the other territories populated by Serbs. In general, Serbian architects and ethnographers divide what they call "popular/folk architecture" or "masonry" (*narodna arhitektura, narodno neimarstvo*) into varieties of "peasant house" (*seoska kuća*) and "urban house" (*varoška kuća*). This feature clearly distinguishes the Serbian interpretation of vernacular heritage from the Romanian one. Concerning the Serbian peasant house specifically, it has at least three or four regional types.[53]

In Vojvodina, as in northern Croatia (Slavonia), Hungary, and the Romanian part of the Banat, the houses are of "Pannonian type" (built of clay or bricks, often with naive elements of Baroque), and they differ clearly from the Balkan houses. In the parts of Montenegro and of Herzegovina situated at or near the Adriatic littoral, vernacular houses are made of stone—just like in Dalmatia. Even if one excludes these non-Balkan—Central European and Adriatic/Mediterranean—territories, the picture still remains diverse. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, in northern Montenegro, in western/southwestern Serbia, and partially in central Serbia (the Šumadija region), the wooden log house with

53 For the regional typology of Serbian and other "Yugoslav" houses, see Branislav Kojić, *Stara gradska i seoska arhitektura u Srbiji* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1949); Aleksandar Deroko, *Folklorna arhitektura u Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1964); Biljana Arandjelović and Ana Momčilović-Petronijević, "The Typology of Traditional Slavic Houses: A Case Study of Serbia," *Arhitektura, raziskave* / *Architecture, Research* 1 (2013): 76–83.

steep planked roofs, known as the *brvnara*, dominates. It is only in the rest of central Serbia (the Pomoravlje region) and, mostly, in eastern/southeastern Serbia, plus Kosovo and Metohija, that one finds traditional houses of timber-framed construction that are called *bondručara*. But even these are not necessarily of "Balkan" type.

Indeed, the traditional houses in the "heart" of Serbia—along the Velika Morava River and eastward up to the Timok region—have a specific structure and appearance that make these as different from the Balkan house as those in, for instance, Wallachia. These are typically ground-floor constructions, often with a shallow stone basement, and are characterized by an arched frontal porch, which is called *trem*, (*h*)*ajat* (from the Turkish term *hayat*), or *doksat* (a term of Greek origin). We find the same element in neighboring northwestern Bulgaria. The conception of this porch is indeed characteristic of the Balkan or the Ottoman house as well but not its arched and plastered form. "Typical" Balkan or Ottoman houses with projected upper stories are found predominantly in southeastern/southern Serbia and in Kosovo. They can also be found elsewhere in Serbia—as well as in Bosnia—but in an urban context. Actually, some of the most fascinating examples of Balkan secular architecture are opulent mansions called *konak*s—from the Turkish term *konak*—and situated in Belgrade. These are the palaces of Princess Ljubica and of Prince Miloš (late 1820s–early 1830s). Perhaps that is why an author such as Maurice Cerasi considers Serbia part of the Balkan vernacular core zone, despite the fact that local peasant dwellings differ substantially.

This specific distribution of Balkan architecture in Serbia again shows its Ottoman context. The regions of Serbia with typical Balkan houses are those that became part of it later in the nineteenth century: in 1878 (the regions of Niš, Pirot, Vranje) or only after the Balkan Wars (Kosovo and Metohija, along with Vardar Macedonia).[54] Just as in Romania, when this architecture appears elsewhere in an urban context, it is the result of previous Ottoman domination. The Ottoman influence was mediated by the know-how of master builders who were most frequently from Macedonia, and it corresponded to the taste not only of Ottoman rulers but also of "cosmopolitan" merchants residing in Serbian towns: again like Romania, these were often Greeks or Balkan Vlachs (known as *Cincari*). For instance, the oldest house in Belgrade (today the Museum of Vuk Karadžić and Dositej Obradović) was built in the eighteenth

54 Here, the exception is the region of Sandžak in western Serbia, which was also annexed during the Balkan Wars. In terms of vernacular architecture and traditional culture, the region is closely connected with Bosnia.

century, probably for a local Ottoman high clerk (*defterdar*).[55] The house in Belgrade known as *Kafana?* (in other words, "Pub Question Mark") was built in the 1820s for the Macedonian merchant Naum Ičko. The master builder of the two princely *konak*s—Nikola Živković—was also from Macedonia (from Voden/Edessa).

Given this Ottoman background, in Serbia the vernacular house of Balkan type was often called *turska kuća* ("Turkish house").[56] Thus, not surprisingly, the broader public does not see Balkan architecture as "more Serbian" than, for instance, the log house (*brvnara*) of western Serbia. It is telling that the country's most important open-air Skanzen-type ethno-museum—the *Staro selo* ("Old Village") next to Sirogojno—presents only the wooden vernacular architecture of the local region of Zlatibor. The Balkan and other types of traditional Serbian houses are not displayed.[57] However, professional ethnography and architectural history give due place to the Balkan house as well. In the Serbian academic context, systematic research on vernacular architecture undoubtedly began with the seminal studies in Balkan and South Slavic "anthropogeography" by the famous geographer, geologist, and ethnographer Jovan Cvijić. Since Cvijić seems to have retained considerable authority in Serbian interpretations of vernacular heritage, his ideas deserve a special discussion here.

In his authoritative work *La péninsule balkanique*,[58] Cvijić suggested, among other theories, a detailed typology of the Balkan towns, villages, and houses. In all these cases, his analysis was actually focused on Serbian traditional culture. He imagined it as "patriarchal," endowed with a typical family structure (the much-discussed *zadruga*), rooted in older Slavic traditions. In accordance with the then-current political project (the book was published in 1918), Cvijić projected the Serbian identity into a more general and diversified "Yugoslav" ethnographic, "racial," and "psychological" typology. The (Yugo)Slav particularities were themselves put into the context of the Balkan peninsula and were localized between a zone of "Occidental civilization" and another one, "properly Balkan." According to Cvijić, the latter represented the old Byzantine civilizational area, marked by later "Turkish-Oriental influences" (*influences turco-orientales*).

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55 According to the museum's website: http://www.narodnimuzej.rs/o-muzeju/prostori-narodnog-muzeja/muzej-vuka-i-dositeja/ (accessed January 20, 2015).

56 Đorđe Petrović, *Narodna arhitektura. Doksati i čardaci* (Belgrade: Građevisnka knjiga, 1955), 46. According to Petrović, this was the general name for the houses with *doksat*.

57 See its website: http://www.sirogojno.rs/pocetna (accessed January 20, 2015). The museum was built in the 1980s based on a project of the architect Ranko Findrik.

58 Jovan Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique. Géographie humaine* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1918).

Just like his typology of Balkan towns and villages, the classification he proposed of vernacular houses often seems perplexing.[59] Cvijić imagined the primitive one-room dwelling—allegedly typical of the ancient Slavs—to be the archetype of the traditional house (*kuća*) of the "Yugoslav" population with its "patriarchal regime." The "Yugoslav" house itself, as Cvijić emphasized, had different types: a "Dinaric house" (corresponding to the *brvnara*), a "Karstic-Mediterranean" stone-built house (in the Adriatic area), and the geographically undefined "modern type" of house (built of stones and bricks and covered with tiles). The geographer saw this kind of house mushrooming in Serbia, and thus this last category mirrored a current development within vernacular architecture.[60]

Yet the rest of Cvijić's classification of Balkan house heritage seems biased. For instance, he spoke of a "Morava and Vardar house," conflating the ground-floor dwellings of central and eastern Serbia with the distinctive Balkan- or Ottoman-type houses of Vardar Macedonia. Although he recognized that two-level houses were "more characteristic" of the Vardar area, he preferred not to distinguish them from the house type that was typical for Serbia. Cvijić even supposed that the Vardar Macedonian house type was historically related to the Serbian seigneurial manors from the fourteenth century—the glorious age of the emperor Stefan Dušan and his successors. Thus through Cvijić's architectural classification, a political agenda transpires. It is worth recalling that his *Péninsule balkanique*, published by the end of World War I and for a Western audience, was meant specifically to show that the Vardar part of Macedonia was Serbian or, at least, not Bulgarian.

The picture becomes especially confused when Cvijić postulates the existence of a "Greek-Mediterranean house" with two levels that is supposedly somehow distinct from the one in the Vardar area. He saw the "Greek-Mediterranean house" mostly in Thrace and at the Macedonian littoral, and he believed it had roots in Byzantine architecture. At the same time, Cvijić supposed that the "Greek-Mediterranean" house was the "prototype" of the "Vardar house." Furthermore, Cvijić classified a separate "Turkish-Oriental type" of house that he covered in the same chapter as the *kula*s—the fortified mansions characteristic of the Islamized "Serbian" (according to him) population of Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as of the Albanian territories. Here the basis for classification seems based on religion rather than on a thorough study

59 Ibid., 225–251.

60 The Serbian architect Kojić confirms that the village house architecture in Serbia underwent a series of changes throughout the nineteenth century: Kojić, *Stara gradska i seoska arhitektura*, 180–181.

of architectural characteristics. For Cvijić, the houses of Ottoman Turkish and Islamized populations were *a priori* different—although, in a contradictory way, he presumed that these could also follow the "Byzantine" tradition. The bias of his approach ultimately seems confirmed by the fact that in Bulgaria he found mostly "mixed types"—"mixed" like all things related to Bulgarians, whom Cvijić treated in his work as "impure" Slavs overly contaminated by "Turkish-Oriental influences."

Many postulates of Cvijić's theory would be constantly repeated in Serbian scholarship, although his political bias—focused on the Macedonian Question—would be abandoned, especially during the Yugoslav communist period. Yet the reference to a supposed primitive Slavic dwelling as the architectural archetype of Serbian houses and, above all, to the "Byzantine" roots of Balkan architecture[61] regularly reappeared. The same is true for the "Turkish" and "Oriental" aspects of the latter.

Examples include the works of two leading architects: Branislav Kojić's *Old Urban and Village Architecture in Serbia* and Aleksandar Deroko's *Folk*(*loric*) *Architecture in Yugoslavia*. Kojić named the Balkan type of house "Balkan profane architecture" (*balkanska profana arhitektura*),[62] while Deroko described it mostly in the chapters about "the urban house of Oriental type" (*varoška kuća orijentalnog tipa*).[63] This term is still commonly used in Serbian works for the vernacular urban type in Serbia, Macedonia, Kosovo-Metohija, and Bosnia. Thus Serbian authors clearly emphasize the "Oriental" traits of this architecture, its "pan-Balkan" as well as Ottoman character. Kojić and Deroko mentioned that it existed not only in the Balkans but also in Anatolia, and suggested comparisons with houses in Bulgaria, Greece, Asia Minor, and even Cairo.[64] Yet they also insisted that this house architecture did not really appear within the Ottoman Empire. Kojić supposed that it had Byzantine roots;[65] Deroko believed that it was a continuation of a "common Byzantine and Near East conception" (*produžetak opšte vizantijske i bliže-orijentalne koncepcije*). At the same time, Deroko also described Byzantine culture as "Oriental"; its

61 In fact, as early as 1886, the Serbian scholar, diplomat, and statesman Stojan Novaković hypothesized that Balkan house architecture was rooted in Byzantine architecture. He stated this in his description of the town of Vranje in southern Serbia. See Kojić, *Stara gradska i seoska arhitektura*, 6.

62 Kojić, *Stara gradska i seoska arhitektura*, 48.

63 Deroko, *Folklorna arhitektura u Jugoslaviji*, 46–76.

64 For a similar emphasis of the "Oriental" traits of Serbian vernacular houses, particularly of the urban house type: Petrović, *Narodna arhitektura. Doksati i čardaci*, 21, 37, 60, 85.

65 Kojić, *Stara gradska i seoska arhitektura*, 98–101.

"Oriental spirit" was only reinforced by the Turkish conquest of the Balkans, and this spirit was completely "fulfilled" in an urban setting—that is, in the old urban houses.[66]

This treatment of Byzantine heritage according to the concepts of "Oriental," espoused by European (art) historians from the nineteenth and early twentieth century, is certainly problematic. Just as problematic is the postulate of Byzantine origins of Balkan vernacular architecture. Serbian architects nevertheless demonstrate quite an open-minded attitude regarding the identity of the latter, far removed from nationalistic claims of "ownership." Thus Kojić declared that "Balkan profane architecture" was not Turkish, as it was not *national* architecture.[67] Most likely, this attitude of Serbian scholars is not only due to the regional variety of Serbian vernacular heritage or to the authority of Jovan Cvijić, who, as we saw, accepted the existence of foreign—"Oriental" and other—influences. It is also the result of a specific political context that took shape at the time Cvijić's work was published in French. This context imposed particular imperatives. Namely, Serbian specialists were theorizing about Balkan and other vernacular types of architecture in a period when Serbia was already part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Moreover, the most authoritative works were published after World War II, in the framework of the second—socialist and federative—Yugoslavia.[68] In both cases the Yugoslav context required a certain sublimation of the national claims.

Furthermore, the break-up of Yugoslavia, marked by wars between Serbs and Muslim populations, in some cases triggered a reconsideration of the "Oriental" and pan-Balkan characteristics of the Serbian vernacular heritage. Such a trend is visible in the more recent works of the architect Ranko Findrik. He emphasizes the "autochthonous" character of the Serbian peasant architecture and, to a lesser extent, the urban architecture: according to Findrik, these have inherited Slavic, ancient Balkan (e.g., Illyrian), and also Byzantine and medieval Serbian characteristics. This holds true of the interior organization and furniture as well: Findrik believes these had medieval Serbian archetypes.[69] Concerning urban architecture, he postulates an important peasant influence on it. Thus although urban houses have Byzantine roots and have absorbed

66 Deroko, *Folklorna arhitektura u Jugoslaviji*, 7–8.

67 Kojić, *Stara gradska i seoska arhitektura*, 101.

68 Apart from the already quoted works of Kojić, Petrović, and Deroko, see Deroko's *Narodno neimarstvo I. Stara seoska kuća* (Belgrade: SANU, 1968); Deroko, *Narodno neimarstvo II. Stara varoška kuća* (Belgrade: SANU, 1968).

69 See Ranko Findrik, *Narodno neimarstvo—stanovanje* (Sirogojno: Staro selo, 1994), 7, 9–17, 170–171.

Oriental influences, with the passing of time (*vremenom*), the autochthonous traits became dominant in these houses as well: thanks to peasant architectural know-how, the urban house is "our own creation" (*naša sopstvena tvorevina*).[70] We will see how, in other national contexts as well (such as Albania and Bulgaria), the thesis of the peasant origins of the vernacular urban architectural heritage serves to nationalize it. As the peasants are believed to keep age-old national traditions, unspoiled by external influences, the emphasis on local, village tastes and building technologies is used to deny undesired foreign contributions.

Although his point of view is more nationalist than the traditional one in Serbian scholarship, even Findrik does not negate "Oriental" contributions to the vernacular urban houses. Moreover, according to him, peasant houses are Serbian par excellence, not the Balkan urban house type—a point of view that mirrors the theories in Romania. Taking these aspects into account, it would be interesting to see in what contexts and for what ideological reasons Serbian architects used elements and motifs of the Balkan or Ottoman vernacular idiom in their modern creations. There were such cases, similarly to what we saw in Romania. Here the Yugoslav political and cultural framework of Serbia was again quite important. Paradoxically, instead of further abandoning Balkan/Ottoman references, it reinforced them—even if much of Yugoslavia did not have similar cultural, particularly architectural, heritage.

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, in their search for a specific national expression, Serbian architects—as well as foreign architects working in Serbia or for Serbian communities elsewhere—have turned mostly to Neo-Byzantine models.[71] For various ideological reasons, these have commonly been applied in the public and religious architecture in Western/Central Europe and Russia. Associated with the Orthodox Christian identity of the Serbian nation as well as—through Russian mediation—with the ideology of Slavdom, and corresponding to Belgrade's then-current political ambitions in the Balkans, the Neo-Byzantine idiom resolutely replaced alternative attempts

70 Findrik, *Narodno neimarstvo*, 126, 185.

71 On the development of Serbian "national style" in architecture: Aleksandar Kadijević, *Jedan vek traženja nacionalnog stila u srpskoj arhitekturi. Sredina XIX–sredina XX veka* (Belgrade: Građevinska knjiga, 1997); Bratislav Pantelić, "Nationalism and Architecture: The Creation of a National Style in Serbian Architecture and its Political Implications," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 1 (1997): 16–41; Igor Marić, "The International versus the National in the Architecture of Serbia as a Creative Basis for Regional Expression," in *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture*, 158–161.

to elaborate a national architectural style.[72] As a matter of fact, the notion of "Neo-Byzantine" is already quite a broad and debatable concept, let alone its specific version(s) in modern Serbian architecture known as "Serbo-Byzantine style" (*srpsko-vizantijski stil*) or simply as "Serbian national style." Thus the first secular building in Belgrade claiming to display a national expression in architecture—the current Rectorate of the University of Belgrade (*Kapetan Mišino zdanje*, 1863)—combined Byzantine, Romanesque, and other features. In the early twentieth century, the Neo-(Romanesque)-Byzantine models coming from Europe and Russia were successfully upgraded with references to what was known as the "Morava style": a specific architectural development in the late medieval Serbian state, characterized by features such as the fine and rich carved stone decoration. The architect Branko Tanazević was particularly inspired by Morava church architecture in his masterworks (*Telefonska centrala*, 1908; Ministry of Education [today *Vukova zadužbina*], 1913).[73]

Yet for the rich decoration of his buildings, Tanazević used also motifs from the Serbian folk heritage: ornaments from embroideries and carpets, as well as some elements from folk architecture. As his example shows, Serbian architects felt the need to adapt the more or less conventional Neo-Byzantine solutions, imported from abroad, to the "genuine" national traditions of Serbia. Ironically, although it was promoted in order to counter the domination of Western academic styles, such as the Neo-Baroque, Neo-Byzantine architecture was criticized as not national enough by the turn of the twentieth century. The decorator Dragutin Inkiostri, Tanazević's collaborator on the building of the Ministry of Education and a tireless researcher of Serbian folk ornaments, initiated a "Revival" of a "purely Serbian" decorative art, different from

72 These include the "nationalization" of Baroque architecture that was typical of Serbian heritage in Vojvodina and/or Hungary. For instance, Belgrade's Cathedral (*Saborna crkva*) was built in 1837–1840 in a Neo-Baroque style. See Popescu, "Un patrimoine de l'identité." On Byzantine studies in Serbia, which represent the intellectual context of the "Byzantinism" in Serbian architecture, see Diana Mishkova's contribution to vol. 3 of *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*.

73 The analysis of the construction and the development of "Serbo-Byzantine" style goes beyond the scope of this presentation. On this topic, see Ada Hajdu's contribution to the present volume. See also Aleksandar Ignjatović, "Byzantium Evolutionized: Architectural History and National Identity in Turn-of-the-Century Serbia," in *Regimes of Historicity in Southeastern and Northern Europe, 1890–1945: Discourses of Identity and Temporality*, eds. Diana Mishkova et al. (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 254–274; Aleksandar Kadijević, "Two Courses of the Serbian Architectural Art Nouveau: International and National," *Nasleđe* 5 (2004): 53–70.

the Byzantine models.[74] As a result of this criticism, a new trend found its way into contemporary Serbian architecture: it was visibly inspired from Serbian "folk arts," particularly from the Serbian vernacular houses. There were two main points of reference of this "folkloristic" architecture: the "Morava house," with an arched plastered porch, and the "Balkan urban house," especially its representative variety, referred to by the Ottoman term *konak*.[75]

Just like in Romania, in Serbia the Balkan (urban) house found a more prominent place in a new version of the national style in the interwar period, and Modernism was an important catalyst of its "rediscovery." The key personality in this process was, again, the architect Branislav Kojić. His own family house in Belgrade, built in 1926–1927, visibly referred to the Balkan vernacular idiom. The exterior with semicircular oriel windows was, it seems, inspired by the *konak* of Princess Ljubica. Yet the result is strikingly similar to works of other Balkan architects from the same period, inspired by the same heritage.[76] Apart from Kojić, Aleksandar Deroko, Momir Korunović, and other Serbian architects applied vernacular and, in particular, Balkan/Ottoman forms and decorations to houses they designed in the 1920s and 1930s. Stories in projection, arched or enclosed wooden balconies (a reference to the vernacular *doksat* or *čardak*), four-sloped roofing with long eaves, and distinctive chimneys were among the most common elements. Balkan motifs also marked the interior decorations and wooden furniture (particularly in the works of Danica Kojić, Branislav's spouse). "Turkish saloons" for receiving guests (also known under the Ottoman-derived term *divanhana*), overlooking courtyard gardens, appeared in the new architectural works.[77]

Not surprisingly, there were initially some public criticisms, including from one of Belgrade's mayors, against the use of what was seen as "Turkish architecture." Yet as we saw, Kojić believed that the Ottomans adopted earlier

74 Pantelić, "Nationalism and Architecture," quoted by Popescu, "Un patrimoine de l'identité."

75 See Vladana Putnik, "The Influence of the Ottoman Architecture on the Aesthetics of Folklorism in Serbian Architecture," in *El Prezente: Studies in Sephardic Culture*, vol. 7, eds. Eliezer Papo and Nenad Makuljević (Beer-Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, 2013), 265–276.

76 For instance, the house of Angeliki Chatzimichali in Athens, designed by the Greek architect Aristotelis Zachos, whose legacy will be discussed later.

77 See Putnik, "The Influence of the Ottoman Architecture," 266–270. On Kojić's works, see also Snežana Toševa, *Branislav Kojić* (Belgrade: Građevinska knjiga, 1998); Srđan Marković, "Tradicionalna srpska arhitektura u delu međuratnog arhitekte Branislava Kojića i odnos našega vremena prema njegovom delu," in *Tradicionalna estetska kultura. Estetska dimenzija kuće*, ed. Dragan Žunić (Niš: CNI SANU i UN, 2006), 127–134.

Byzantine building models—a theory whose credibility was backed up with Cvijić's authority. At the same time, Kojić emphasized that the "Balkan profane architecture" from the Ottoman period was not connected to any Balkan nation in particular: it belonged to the whole region, in spite of current national or religious boundaries. This both a-national and "pan-Balkan" aspect, as well as the postulated continuity of Balkan vernacular idiom with regard to earlier Balkan/Byzantine heritage, turned out to be extremely important for one purpose: the construction of a "Yugoslav" architectural identity.[78]

In the context of a frequently uneasy cohabitation of diverse nations in the interwar Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (since 1929, Yugoslavia), a series of buildings was supposed to incarnate this common identity. This is specifically the case for the palace of King Alexander Karađorđević in the Belgrade suburb of Dedinje (*Kraljevski dvor*), built in 1924–1926 and designed by Viktor Lukomskiy, Nikolay Krasnov, and Živojin Nikolić. The design of the building partially refers to the Balkan urban house. A similar case is the Yugoslav embassy in Ankara (1936, architect Kosta Jovanović).[79]

The Balkan reference in these projects is a result of a number of interrelated reasons. On the one hand, Balkan heritage is clearly imagined as a continuation of the Byzantine heritage (especially in the Royal Palace). The Balkan forms are actually amalgamated with Neo-Byzantine models, and these buildings were (and are) theoretically considered to be in the "Serbo-Byzantine style."[80] On the other hand, the choice of Balkan vernacular elements shows an attempt to symbolically overcome the national diversity of interwar Yugoslavia through the projection of a common Balkan cultural identity over the actual patchwork of ethnic, national, and religious identities. As the vernacular Balkan house type is not religiously or nationally specific, it was supposed to promote the unity of a multinational and multireligious country. Any stronger emphasis on Serbian "Byzantinism" might be detrimental from this point of view. Moreover, Balkan architectural references were supposed to symbolically reaffirm the sovereignty of this state in the even larger context of Southeast Europe. Serbian, Yugoslav, and Balkan identity were distinctively intertwined: Dedinje's palace is the palace of a "Balkan king," ruling over the "Yugoslav Balkans," situated

78 On "Yugoslavism" in architecture: Aleksandar Ignjatović, *Jugoslovenstvo u arhitekturi 1904–1941* (Belgrade: Građevinska knjiga, 2007).

79 See Aleksandar Kadijević, "O arhitekturi jugoslovenskog poslanstva u Ankari," *Nasleđe* 11 (2010), 55–70.

80 Kadijević, "O arhitekturi jugoslovenskog poslanstva," 65.

between the "East" and the "West."[81] In this way, Yugoslav sovereignty was symbolically set in opposition to the ambitions of revisionist states in Central Europe, the Balkans and, especially, Mussolini's Italy. The "Balkanism" of interwar Yugoslav architecture was thus inscribed in the specific international context of the period, with the attempts to achieve good neighborly relations and cooperation in the Balkans (as attested by the creation of a Balkan Entente).[82]

In this manner, in Serbia, as in Romania, the reference to the Balkan vernacular idiom was invested with important ideological stakes, despite the lack of overall symbolic appropriation of Balkan house architecture in scholarly studies. Yet "the Balkans" were certainly more diverse than interwar Yugoslav ideology could accept. As they gradually constructed their own ideologies and scholarly traditions, other Yugoslav nations started formulating their own claims to the same Balkan heritage that was supposed to underpin the unity of the large South Slavic country.

National as Oriental: The "Bosnian House"

In the cases of three nations—Bosniaks, Albanians, and Macedonians—the Balkan or Ottoman house type was imagined as a nationally representative kind of architectural heritage to a much larger extent than in the Romanian or Serbian context. In general, the Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Albania[83] also have an architectural and urban heritage from the Ottoman period that is much better preserved than that in the Balkan "Orthodox" nation-states that appeared in the nineteenth century. However, all that did not necessarily entail the denial of the "pan-Balkan" or Ottoman character of the same heritage. In the case of Bosniaks and Albanians, one must take into account a salient cultural feature: they are either Muslim by definition (Bosniaks) or predominantly Muslim (Albanians). This does not make their national ideologies necessarily more pro-Ottoman than those of their Christian neighbors.

81 Putnik, "The Influence of the Ottoman Architecture," 271, referring to Ignjatović, *Jugoslovenstvo u arhitekturi*, 189.

82 In some cases, Yugoslav identity was projected back in a long historical continuity to eras even preceding Byzantium and reaching as far as the ancient Illyrian Balkans. Such an ideological search was confirmed in a sense by the development of Balkan studies in Yugoslavia in the same period. On this problem, see Diana Mishkova's contribution to the present volume.

83 With the notable exception of the capital, Tirana, whose urban reshaping during the interwar period, World War II, and the communist period destroyed almost all the heritage from the Ottoman era.

Albanians in particular developed nationalistic narratives about the Ottoman era with anti-Turkish overtones similar to those of the "Christian" national ideologies in the Balkans. Yet the particularity of Bosniaks' and Albanians' symbolic position as Muslims within the previous Ottoman political and cultural setting entailed an ambiguous articulation of their supposed national culture with regard to Ottoman culture, in which "national" also meant, to some extent, "Ottoman."

In two of these cases—Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Republic of Macedonia—the presence of scholarly references to a larger Ottoman or Balkan architectural context could also be explained in part by the fact that their architectural theories evolved in the framework of Yugoslavia, royal and/or socialist. These theories had to take into account a larger multinational context where the same heritage existed: as a result, its symbolic "nationalization" was not so easy. At the same time, the concepts they developed were influenced by fellow Yugoslav architectural theories—particularly the Serbian theory, which emphasized the Balkan or "Oriental" character of the secular architecture discussed in the present study.

Here another distinctive feature emerges: these countries also have more recent scholarly traditions, in architecture and ethnography than countries such as Romania and Serbia. Additionally, their theories of "national" architectural style and heritage seem less developed. Yet in terms of both the description of vernacular house heritage by ethnographers or architects and the modern architectural accomplishments in a "national style," a significant legacy has been left by foreign specialists, particularly in Bosnia and Albania. In Bosnia, these architects and scholars were Austro-Hungarians (Czechs, Germans, and others, although it is often difficult to define them by ethnic identity), Croats (both as Austro-Hungarians and, after 1918, as Yugoslavs), and Serbs. In Albania, they were also Austro-Hungarians, as well as Italians. The same specialists invented some of the "specific," "national" architectural forms of these countries.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is undoubtedly the most inspiring of these three cases in terms of modern architectural theories and accomplishments. Moreover, the Balkan or Ottoman house played an important symbolic role in the articulation of Bosnian cultural identity. Yet the choice of this house as a national symbol is by no means self-evident: just like in Serbia, vernacular architectural heritage is not only of the Balkan type. As already mentioned, in the urban centers of Bosnia, typical Ottoman houses are found. Like elsewhere in the Balkans, the most representative ones are called *konak*s. But the local peasant architecture is of the *brvnara* type—log houses with sharp-pointed shake roofs, the same that is found in western Serbia. It must be noted nevertheless that there is

frequently a peculiar version of the Balkan timber-framed and two-story house: it has the sharper shake roofing of the *brvnara* and a very slightly cantilevered upper story. At the same time, in Herzegovina, the southern/southeastern part of the country near the Adriatic coast, fine stone architecture similar to that in Dalmatia can be found.[84] Hence in order to understand why the Ottoman house type was chosen as the most representative of the country's cultural identity, we must study the ways this identity has been imagined since the late nineteenth century.

Throughout that century, the Muslim population of Bosnia was reputed for its conservatism, which was nurtured by the country's geographical position: a borderland of the Ottoman Empire, encircled by an expansionist Christian Central European monarchy. In 1878, the fears of local Muslims proved well founded: Bosnia-Herzegovina was occupied by the Dual Monarchy and then fully annexed in 1908. Although tens of thousands of Muslims fled to Ottoman territory, the Austro-Hungarian occupation did not have much to do with the anti-Muslim ethnic cleansing that traditionally accompanied the creation and enlargement of the Balkan Orthodox states. Belgrade laid claim to Bosnian territory, as the Orthodox/the Serbs were the largest community there.[85] Vienna had no interest in turning Bosnia into a virtually Orthodox Serbian country through Muslim emigration. Moreover, the Herzegovinian and Bosnian Croats were attracted to the nationalist messages coming from Zagreb, just as the local Serbs were to those from Belgrade. Given this complex situation, Vienna chose to promote the specific identity of "Bosnianness" (*bošnjaštvo*). On the one hand, it encouraged among the local population a territorial identification at the expense of ethno-religious communitarianism. On the other hand, Vienna's policy in the country clearly privileged the Muslim community, who had to be won over to the cause of the Central European empire. The Austro-Hungarian promotion of *bošnjaštvo* concerned all fields of national culture and identity—the language policy, the history-writing, and quite visibly the field of architecture.[86]

84 The traditional architecture of Bosnia-Herzegovina is presented in Kojić, *Stara gradska i seoska arhitektura*, and Deroko, *Folklorna arhitektura u Jugoslaviji*.

85 Maximilian Hartmuth, "The Habsburg Landesmuseum in Sarajevo in Its Ideological and Architectural Contexts: A Reinterpretation," *Centropa* 12, no. 2 (2012): 194.

86 On Bosnian identity in Austro-Hungarian architecture: Maximilian Hartmuth, "Insufficiently Oriental? An Early Episode in the Study and Preservation of the Ottoman Architectural Heritage in the Balkans," in *Monuments, Patrons, Contexts: Papers on Ottoman Europe Presented to Machiel Kiel*, eds. Maximilian Hartmuth and Ayşe Dilsiz (Leiden: NINO, 2010), 171–184; Maximilian Hartmuth, "Between Vienna and Istanbul: Imperial Legacies, Visual Identities, and 'Popular' and 'High' Layers of Architectural Discourse in/

From the 1880s on, architects such as Kar(e)l Paržik, Franz (František) Blažek, and others created numerous buildings in Bosnia-Herzegovina, chiefly in Sarajevo. In their designs, they applied different styles that already existed in the Central European architecture of the period. Yet the most conspicuous idiom they used was a version of what was known as the (Pseudo-)Moorish style, which was employed for different types of building and identity reasons in Europe and in European colonies overseas. By the twentieth century, a series of public buildings in this style marked the townscape not only in Sarajevo but also in the country (e.g., in Mostar). The most significant and famous of these is certainly Sarajevo's City Hall (*Vijećnica*) (1892–1894, later the National and University Library), designed by Alexander Wittek and Ćiril Iveković. Ironically, through this architecture inspired by "Islamic" traditions, Austro-Hungarian rule gave Bosnian towns an exotic Orientalist aspect, which went hand in hand with their "Europeanization" according to the rules of modern urban planning. Yet, from today's point of view at least, the Pseudo-Moorish style did not have much in common with local Ottoman traditions of Bosnia: its sources of inspiration were the architecture of Moorish Spain and of Mamluk Egypt.

Austro-Hungarian architectural Orientalism in Bosnia stirred many debates among art historians. Some of them considered it a dramatic misinterpretation of the local architectural heritage. Others saw it as a tactic to cut Bosnia-Herzegovina off from its Ottoman past in favor of a more generalizing form of Islamic cultural identity. Yet as the art historian Maximilian Hartmuth shows, architects such as Karel Paržik sincerely believed that their projects were inspired by the "Oriental monuments" of Bosnia. They were convinced they had proposed a modern Bosnian *Heimatstil* based on the "local" heritage. Instead of being a colonial over-exotification of Bosnia, the "Bosnian style" (*bosanski stil, bosanski slog u arhitekturi*) instead represents the beginnings of European academic knowledge about Ottoman architecture. The academically trained architects were actually interested in the "origins" of world "styles," and as Ottoman architecture was essentially "Islamic," it was considered an offspring of the wider "Arab" architecture. For the rest, Ottoman architectural heritage

on Sarajevo, ca. 1900 and 2000," in *Images of Imperial Legacy: Modern Discourses on the Social and Cultural Impact of Ottoman and Habsburg Rule in Southeast Europe*, eds. Tea Sindbaek and Maximilian Hartmuth (Münster: Lit, 2011), 79–104; Maximilian Hartmuth, "The Habsburg Landesmuseum in Sarajevo," 194–205. See also Nedžad Kurto, *Arhitektura Bosne i Hercegovine. Razvoj bosanskog stila* (Sarajevo: Sarajevo Publishing/Međunarodni centar za mir, 1998).

was deemed uninteresting, as it was too "recent" and derivative of Byzantine architecture.[87] Balkan scholars wholeheartedly agreed on the last point.

In general, the characteristic features of the Balkan or Ottoman house type did not have much place in the new richly ornamented buildings, whose models were in Granada or Cairo. Yet the general interest in the local traditions of Bosnia—or in what was imagined as such traditions—also made possible the "discovery" of the vernacular house architecture in some specific contexts. Just as in other cases in (and beyond) the Balkans, such context was offered by international exhibitions—an occasion for each country to present, to the "society" of modern nations, its own traditions and specificities in vernacular architecture, decorative arts, and crafts. When Bosnia was included to participate in the Hungarian Millennium Exposition in Budapest (1896), its pavilion had the appearance of a "Bosnian house." In fact, it was quite a faithful copy of a Muslim urban house, with its typical interior and plan, characterized by the division into *selamlık* and *harem* (*selamluk* and *haremluk* in the local language[s]). The Bosnian pavilion at the Exposition Universelle in Paris (1900) also included typical volumes of an urban house from the Ottoman period, along with references to fortified mansions from the same period, as well as with other Ottoman and Orientalist elements.[88] World fairs were not the only place where the vernacular architecture of Bosnia was featured in modern buildings. For instance, a hotel in Sarajevo (*Han Gazi Husrev-begovog vakufa*), built in 1909, was designed by the Croatian architect Josip Vancaš and by the Czech Josef Pospíšil in a vernacular idiom. It has stories in projection, a wooden enclosed veranda with continuous windows, and a curved "Ottoman Baroque" façade that conspicuously recalls residential buildings in other parts of the (former) Ottoman Empire (such as Plovdiv in Bulgaria).

In fact, next to architectural design, an important field of study that made possible the valorization of the "Bosnian house" was ethnography. In the Bosnian context, ethnography was also imported from Vienna, and the institution that served as the main mediator was the Country Museum (*Landesmuseum, Zemaljski muzej*) inaugurated in Sarajevo in 1888. From the very beginning, the museum had an ethnographical section displaying the wooden interiors of "houses of Mohammedan notables," with mannequins dressed in traditional costumes. It thus paradoxically presented a way of life

87 See the discussion in Hartmuth, "Between Vienna and Istanbul," 90–98.

88 See Aida Lipa, "The Austro-Hungarian Period in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Cultural Politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Creation of the Western Type of Art," *Kakanien Revisited*, May 26, 2006, 2–3, http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/fallstudie/ALipa1.pdf (accessed January 20, 2015).

that was still quite typical for Bosnia and far from outdated.[89] The interior designer of the section was the aforementioned architect Josef Pospíšil. In general, the Landesmuseum had a great impact on the way Bosnian history and heritage was articulated and interpreted in the decades to come: it staged the official narrative of a particular Bosnian/Bosniak identity evolving through history. Moreover, it functioned as a research institute that was even supposed to become the most important center studying the history not only of Bosnia but of the whole Balkans since antiquity—a project that was crowned with the establishment of the Institut für Balkanforschung within the museum's premises in 1904.

In addition to specialists such as Pospíšil, the "Bosnian house" was studied by yet another Austro-Hungarian author, Rudolf Meringer, a linguist tempted by the scholarly discipline of the *Volkskunde* (ethnography and folklore studies). In his detailed studies,[90] Meringer first paid special attention to the different types of vernacular dwellings in Bosnia, particularly the log house (*brvnara*). However, in the imagery of the "Bosnian house," developed under Austro-Hungarian rule, it was obviously the Ottoman type—the urban Muslim house of "Oriental" type—that received the main focus.

It must be noted that this house type was also perceived in a way that made it look even more "Oriental." In the European artistic imagination of the period, "Oriental" meant, among other things, exuberant and richly ornamented. Ironically, the Austro-Hungarian specialists tried to "correct" the "poor" aspects of Bosnia's Ottoman monuments: some local religious buildings, including the most famous one (Gazi Husrev-beg's Mosque in Sarajevo, built in 1531), were partially "Arabicized" during their restoration in order to fix their "stylistic inaccuracies."[91] In general, *fin-de-siècle* European architecture was, as Maximilian Hartmuth puts it, "concerned with show": it was highly decorative, and simple forms were given short shrift.[92] It is telling that the family house of Husedžinović in Banja Luka (1913), also designed by Josip Vancaš and inspired by the vernacular urban house, was endowed with an "Arabian

89 Some Viennese ethnographers saw the section's mission as the revitalization of traditional crafts and their adaptation to modern needs. There were even voices deploring the then-current loss of "authenticity" in Muslim dwellings: Hartmuth, "The Habsburg Landesmuseum in Sarajevo," 198–199.

90 Rudolf Meringer, *Das volkstümliche Haus in Bosnien und der Hercegovina* (*Wissenschaftliche Mitteilungen aus Bosnien und der Hercegovina*, vol. 7) (Vienna, 1900); Rudolf Meringer, *Die Stellung des bosnischen Hauses und Etymologien zum Hausrath* (*Sitzungsber. der philos.-hist. Kl. d. Akad. d. Wissensch.*, 144) (Vienna, 1902).

91 Hartmuth, "Insufficiently Oriental?" 179–180.

92 Hartmuth, "Between Vienna and Istanbul," 97.

room." Its rich wooden furniture was supplied from Cairo via Vienna—a striking import in the literal sense, following the symbolic import of the Pseudo-Moorish/Mamluk style through Austria.[93]

Unlike elsewhere in the Balkans, in Bosnia-Herzegovina the interwar period does not seem to have contributed substantially to the imagery of the "national house." Compared to the impressive rhythms of architectural creation and urban development under Austro-Hungarian rule, the royal Yugoslav period in Bosnian architecture is often described in terms of "stagnation." The country found itself in the middle of the new South Slavic monarchy, which was shaken by internal conflicts, chiefly between Serbs and Croats—particularly over the national identity of Bosnia. Bosnian Muslims, themselves in a process of difficult national emancipation, were targeted by rivaling state projects: the Serbs' unitarist-Yugoslavism and the Croats' federalism or independentism. In some cases, the Yugoslav monarchy adopted the Orientalist imagery of Bosnia that was promoted under Austro-Hungarian rule: in 1922, a "Bosnian room"—a copy of a *divanhana*—found a place in the New Palace (*Novi dvor*) in Belgrade.[94] However, architectural Modernism made inroads in Bosnia as well, particularly in Sarajevo.

As elsewhere, Modernism triggered a certain reappraisal of the vernacular architecture, although this happened only after 1945, in the framework of the second Yugoslavia (this one socialist and federative). The reappraisal involved a specific republic, Bosnia-Herzegovina, yet the political context was again quite complex. Bosnian Muslims/Bosniaks were initially not categorized as a constitutive nation (*narod*) of Yugoslavia but rather as a confessional community. This was, however, problematic in many ways. First, it created difficulties for the Bosniaks themselves, who were finally recognized in 1971 as a Muslim nation.[95] Second, it was precisely the Muslim religion and the Ottoman cultural identity of Bosnia that the communist regime tried, at least initially, to marginalize. The regime saw Ottoman heritage as the legacy of a long foreign rule and feared that any insistence on it might provoke the hostility of Serbs

93 See Lejla Bušatlić, "Transformacije gradske kuće orijentalnog tipa u postosmanskom periodu na području Bosne i Hercegovine," in *Centres and Peripheries in Ottoman Architecture: Rediscovering a Balkan Heritage*, ed. Maximilian Hartmuth (Stockholm and Sarajevo: CHwB, 2010), 129, 134.

94 Putnik, "The Influence of the Ottoman Architecture," 270, referring to Ignjatović, *Jugoslovenstvo u arhitekturi*, 128–129.

95 On Bosnian Muslims in Yugoslav nationality politics: see Sabrina Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918–2005* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 285–293.

and Croats. New Bosnia had to be secular and multinational. Located at the heart of socialist Yugoslavia, it was supposed to incarnate Yugoslav "brotherhood and unity," as it was the only republic not created along ethno-national lines. However, any stronger emphasis on the "internationalist" character of the country frustrated Muslims, who insisted on the recognition of Bosnia's unique cultural identity and heritage. Thus from the outset, Tito's administration was forced to navigate between mutually exclusive needs and claims.[96]

An interesting project of the urban renovation of Sarajevo's city center illustrates this tension in the first years of the regime: the idea to define a specific Bosnian architectural heritage and to propose a new, socialist, reshaping of the cityscape. It was pursued in a project concerning the Ottoman bazaar district of Sarajevo—the Baščaršija—elaborated by the prominent Croatian architect Juraj Neidhardt in collaboration with the Slovene architectural theorist and historian Dušan Grabrijan. Announced in their joint book *Architecture of Bosnia and the Way toward Modernity*,[97] the project was never implemented.[98] The book was nevertheless extremely influential and shaped to a large extent the way the Bosnian architectural heritage was perceived in Yugoslavia. Neidhardt and Grabrijan suggested a certain vision about the vernacular house from the Ottoman period, which was both Modernist and formulated in national terms.

It must be noted that, in the 1930s, Neidhardt had been collaborating for three years with Le Corbusier. Based on the ideas of the great master of modern architecture, Neidhardt and Grabrijan's interpretation of Ottoman vernacular architecture was largely the Bosnian analog of the Modernist readings of the same architecture in interwar Romania and other countries of the region. The starting point of their theory was Le Corbusier's fascination with

96 For an overview of the political context with regard to the Ottoman heritage of Bosnia: Dijana Alić and Maryam Gusheh, "Reconciling National Narratives in Socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Baščaršija Project, 1948–1953," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58 (1999): 12–13.

97 Juraj Neidhardt and Dušan Grabrijan, *Arhitektura Bosne i put u suvremeno* (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1957).

98 It actually suggested a certain "de-Islamization" of the Baščaršija district, whose discussion goes beyond the scope of the present work. For more information and an analysis of the project, see Alić and Gusheh, "Reconciling National Narratives in Socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina," as well as Alić and Gusheh, "Appropriation of the Ottoman Heritage in Socialist Yugoslavia: The Baščaršija Project (1948–53)," *ACSA European Conference* (Berlin, 1997), 180–181, http://apps.acsa-arch.org/resources/proceedings/uploads/streamfile.aspx?path=ACSA.Intl.1997&name=ACSA.Intl.1997.34.pdf (accessed January 20, 2015).

"Islamic" and "Oriental" urban structures and buildings.[99] These he considered to be a possible source of renovation of European architecture, thanks to their "sensual" character that lacked Western logic.[100] In their book, Neidhardt and Grabrijan emphasized the allegedly important contribution that Bosnian vernacular heritage was able to offer modern architecture. This was presumably the proof of the intrinsically "modern" character of Bosnian traditional constructions, particularly of the vernacular house. On the one hand, they apparently chose it as a civic heritage, dissociated from Islam. On the other hand, Neidhardt and Grabrijan emphasized a number of (presumed) aspects of the traditional Bosnian house that they deemed to match modern qualities. These included geometric volumes, the human scale of building, ventilation and the right of view (*pravo na vidik*), and relationship to nature. Like Constantin Joja in Romania, who claimed that the enclosed verandas with *camlık* were precursors of modern glass façades, Neidhardt and Grabrijan discovered plenty of modern elements, from the built-in wardrobes, known as *musandere*, to the vegetation spilling into the dwellings.[101]

Simultaneously, Neidhardt and Grabrijan claimed that the local house type from the Ottoman period was specifically a *Bosnian* house. Indeed, they partially acknowledged its "Oriental" origins as they termed it the "Bosnian Oriental house" and compared it, as "Balkan architecture," with the house types in Serbia and Macedonia. In their opinion, local architecture "has certainly developed under the influence of the Orient, but its forms and creations are not simply planted here; they grew organically out of our people."[102] In fact, Neidhardt and Grabrijan's insistence on a specific Bosnian type of house was based on a certain de-Orientalization of local heritage, occurring in parallel with a *re*-Orientalization of the image of the Ottoman Empire (and of Turkey). Thus they emphasized that Bosnia was at the periphery of the Ottoman Empire, far from Istanbul. That is why, according to the authors, the "Bosnian Oriental house" was simple, without "unnecessary decoration," while "Turkey is all in gold." In their view, the simplicity of the Bosnian house was the result of the hard life and insecurity that allegedly did not allow wealthy persons to build representative houses different from those of poor peasants. As a result, even if basic elements were taken from the "Oriental house," they were reworked by

99 Le Corbusier himself wrote the foreword to the book: Neidhardt and Grabrijan, *Arhitektura Bosne*, 6–7.

100 Alić and Gusheh, "Reconciling National Narratives in Socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina," 10.

101 Neidhardt and Grabrijan, *Arhitektura Bosne*, 14.

102 Ibid., 12.

local people and adapted to local needs: "that is why the Bosnian house is different from the Turkish one" (*zbog toga je bosanska kuća drugačija od turske*).[103]

Ironically, while the "Bosnian house" was promoted under Austro-Hungarian rule on the grounds of its supposed exuberant Orientality, Modernist architects valued the same house type as simple, sober, and far from the excessively decorated character of "Oriental" architecture. Needless to say, Neidhardt and Grabrijan's idea that no one in Bosnia tried to build representative houses different from those of the poor bluntly contradicts the facts. It is enough to visit the Svrzo house (*Svrzina kuća*) in Sarajevo, a huge urban house with a complex plan from the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century, quite different from a usual peasant house. Yet through this claim, Neidhardt and Grabrijan provided the popular "rooting" and the ultimate nationalization of the Ottoman house. Their theory thus provided two aspects that socialist Yugoslavia was trying to unite in Bosnia: a specific heritage, based on the Islamic/Ottoman/"Oriental" traditions of the country, yet sufficiently de-Islamized and de-Ottomanized to be acceptable to the secular needs of the socialist state (and to the national needs of Bosnian Serbs and Croats). At the same time, the study of local heritage was strangely "sublimated" in the imperative to build modern and socialist architecture.

Soon, Bosnia developed its own architectural theory and history, in which the vernacular house of Ottoman/Balkan type was—and is—referred to in different ways. This includes the use of longer expressions such as "urban house of Oriental type" and "Islamic-Oriental house from the Ottoman period."[104] Thus the connection to the "Orient," the Ottoman Empire as well as Islam, is often emphasized, in contrast with Neidhardt and Grabrijan's de-Islamizing strategy. Here it must be pointed out that the other Yugoslav specialists—such as the Serbians—generally do not contest the broader Ottoman context of this specific vernacular type. Cvijić, who is still quoted by Bosniak scholars as well, also spoke of the "Turkish-Oriental type" of house.[105] However, Bosniak authors are

103 Ibid. See also Alić and Gusheh, "Reconciling National Narratives in Socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina," 13–14.

104 See Amir Pašić, "Arhitektura Bosne i Hercegovine. Osmanski period (1463–1878). Stanovanje," https://www.scribd.com/document/56128745/04-Arhitektura-BH-1463-1878-Stanovanje (accessed January 20, 2015). See also Amir Pašić, *Islamic Architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Istanbul: IRCICA, 1994).

105 Apart from the field of scholarship, the way this architectural heritage is exposed to larger public is also telling. For instance, the house known as *Biščevića ćošak* in Mostar is presented to tourists as a "Turkish house"; the Muslibegović house in the same town is a "national monument from the Ottoman (Turkish) period," etc. Here one must

likewise inclined to interpret the "urban house of Oriental type" in Bosnia as a specific evolution of the Ottoman house that presumably took place in Bosnia and nowhere else. Although it has characteristics of the Ottoman house, the "Bosnian house," Bosniak authors maintain, has certain distinctive features coming from the country's geographical situation between East and West, as well as from the local conditions, climate, and building materials. In this insistence, one can still perceive the legacy of Neidhardt's and Grabrijan's theory.

The allegations of specific Bosnian features nevertheless remain highly abstract. Indeed, as mentioned above, in Bosnia-Herzegovina one can find certain local variations of the Ottoman house type, such as houses with distinctively sharper and shake roofing. Yet such particularities—a result of local traditions and available materials—hardly make Bosnian traditional houses more "European." The indication of isolated decorative elements or pieces of furniture with Western provenance allegedly proves the specific civilizational situation of the "Bosnian house," but in fact, it is hardly sufficient to do so.[106] Influences of Baroque, Rococo, Empire, or Neo-Classicism characterize official Ottoman architecture in the very center of the Empire: Istanbul. Western features, although most often mediated by Istanbul, are to be found in the rich urban houses in Plovdiv in Bulgaria, Xanthi in Greece, and Asia Minor. As a matter of fact, concerning European influences, the vernacular houses of conservative Muslim Bosnia are not necessarily the most representative within the former Ottoman context. The *Svrzina kuća* in Sarajevo—an incontestable masterpiece—actually has few elements that might bring it closer to any Western European artistic tradition.

Oriental or Classical, Byzantine, or Slavic? Approaches to the Traditional House in the Republic of Macedonia

The vernacular house heritage of the Republic of Macedonia (territorially, Vardar Macedonia[107]) certainly seems more homogenous than those

nevertheless take into account the possibility of a recent symbolic "re-Islamization" and "re-Turkification" of heritage, following the war in the 1990s.

106 For instance, Bušatlić, "Transformacije gradske kuće orijentalnog tipa."

107 Macedonia, a traditionally multiethnic region, is certainly a controversial concept given all the claims of ownership of its historical heritage. Even the territorial boundaries of "geographical Macedonia" are controversial. Here I will deal with the interpretations of the vernacular architecture in the Republic of Macedonia, which covers geographically what was known as Vardar Macedonia: the territory that was part of Serbia after

of the national contexts analyzed so far: it is undoubtedly Balkan/Ottoman. Nevertheless, in some areas, Macedonian Slavic peasants used to inhabit simple huts, while elaborate stone constructions of houses are also typical, especially in the west of the country, such as in the village of Galičnik in the Mala Reka area, part of the Debar/Dibra region. Just like many other places in the wider "geographical Macedonia," this area has long produced numerous master builders and other craftsmen working on secular or religious buildings (woodcarvers, icon painters). They were famed all over the Balkans and even in the rest of the Ottoman Empire.

However, despite Macedonian builders' traditional virtuosity, one can hardly speak of the existence of Macedonian *national* architecture prior to the creation of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia within the Yugoslav socialist federation in 1944–1945. As with the Bosniaks, Macedonian national culture was definitively founded only after World War II. However, in the Macedonian case, the modern architectural heritage invested with "national" character is rudimentary before socialist Yugoslavia. Indeed, academic influences made inroads in late Ottoman Macedonia, but these did not entail the search for a particular ethno-national and cultural identity for Macedonian Slavs. For instance, Bitola (Monastiri in Greek)—the second-largest city of the Republic of Macedonia—has an eclectic architecture with Neo-Classical features from the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. But if the Neo-Classical design had an ideological message at all, it was supposed to demonstrate the national character of the local Greek (or pro-Greek Vlach and Slavic) urban class.[108]

In a number of cases, Macedonian masters demonstrated an extraordinary capacity to assimilate elements and plans derived from European academic architecture, and some of their works clearly surpassed the usual level of provincial, academically untrained builders. This is particularly the case for Andreja Damjanov, who, between the 1830s and the 1870s, designed a series of impressive churches partially inspired by the Central European Baroque.

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the Balkan wars, of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia through the interwar period, of Bulgaria for short periods in the two world wars, and again of Yugoslavia, this time socialist and federative, between 1945 and 1991. Respectively, I will look at the definitions of the architectural heritage associated concretely with the Slav-speaking Macedonians and with the Macedonian nation. The Greek cultural context of Macedonia will be examined later.

108 See the study of the urban history of Bitola by Bernard Lory, *La ville balkanissime: Bitola 1800–1918* (Istanbul: Isis, 2011). On architecture in Macedonia since the late nineteenth century: Kokan Grčev, *From Origins to Style: Macedonian Architecture at the End of the 19th Century and in the Period Between the Two World Wars* (Skopje: Institute of Folklore, 2004).

These works are to be found in present-day Macedonia, Serbia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina—including the immense Serbian Orthodox cathedrals in Sarajevo (completed in 1874) and in Mostar (1873, destroyed during the war in 1992). For that reason, Damjanov is regularly included in histories of Serbian architecture as one of the first architects of the "Serbo-Byzantine style."[109] However, careful study of the biographies and the legacy of traditional master builders rarely reveals the existence of a national motivation behind their works. Not surprisingly, it has been possible to praise Andreja Damjanov as a great "Bulgarian master" in Bulgarian architectural literature[110] and as a "Macedonian master" in the Macedonian literature.[111]

Conversely, during the interwar period, Serbian and other Yugoslav professional architects designed modern architecture in Vardar Macedonia, and in some cases they included references to the vernacular heritage. This was the case, for instance, for Branislav Kojić, the leading representative of the Serbian "folkloristic" trend in architecture, as well as the theoretician of "Balkan profane architecture." The Children's Home and the Student's Home, designed by Kojić in Skopje in the early 1930s, were visibly inspired by the local house types.[112] However, this was the period in which Vardar Macedonia was officially treated as "southern Serbia." Just as in the contexts of Bosnia and Albania, foreign architects and ethnographers—chiefly Serbs and Bulgarians in this case—were the first to study the country's vernacular architectural heritage. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to make a clear distinction between "natives" and "foreigners" in the Macedonian context, as some of the latter were actually natives. Bulgarian

109 On Damjanov, see Nenad Makuljević, "Andreja Damjanov—arhitekta poznoosmanskog Balkana," *Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti* 38 (2010): 137–150; Aleksandar Kadijević, "Graditeljska delatnost Andreje Damjanova—pravci istraživanja i zaštite," http://www.arte.rs/sr/umetnici/teoreticari/aleksandar_kadijevic-4101/tekstovi/graditeljska_delatnost_andreje_damjanova_pravci_istrazivanja_i_zastite-2176/ (accessed January 20, 2015).

110 The activity of Damjanov and other Macedonian masters was studied in particular by a Bulgarian scholar: Asen Vasiliev, *Bălgarski văzrozhdenski maystori: zhivopistsi, rezbari, stroiteli* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1965).

111 Krum Tomovski, *Majstor Andreja Damjanov* (Skopje: Arhitektonsko-gradežen fakultet, 1966); Krum Tomovski, *Makedonskite majstori-graditeli od devetnaesettiot vek* (Skopje: MANU, 2006), 43–70. See also Tomovski's contribution in *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Od sredinata na XIX do krajot na XX vek* (Skopje: MANU, 2006), 53–59.

112 See Marković, "Tradicionalna srpska arhitektura u delu međuratnog arhitekte," 131. On Serbian and other Yugoslav architects (Russian immigrants, Croats) in Vardar Macedonia during the interwar period: *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Od sredinata na XIX do krajot na XX vek*, as well as Grčev, *From Origins to Style*.

and, less frequently, Serbian scholars dealing with Macedonian Slavic traditions often originated from Macedonia. The Serbian architect and mayor of Skopje Josif Mihajlović—who, like Kojić, designed buildings in the interwar period inspired from the vernacular heritage[113]—was born in a village in the region of Debar/Dibra. As a result of the difficult development of Macedonian national ideology, until the end of World War II, native specialists represented the political causes of other national centers.

Thus Macedonian "national style" in modern architecture and the Macedonian history and theory of vernacular architectural heritage began only in socialist Yugoslavia—on Serbian (and Yugoslav) as well as on Bulgarian ground. For Macedonian specialists interested in traditional architecture, the points of reference remained for a long time the Yugoslav and the Bulgarian scholarly works.[114] Most importantly, these specialists were educated in Yugoslav academic institutions and evolved as practicing architects and theoreticians in a Yugoslav context. Given all that, concerning the interpretation of the vernacular house type, one would expect the mainstream theory to develop similarly to that of Serbia or Bosnia. Indeed, there are many similarities between the Macedonian approach to vernacular architecture and those in the other Yugoslav cases. However, Macedonian architectural-history-writing eventually adopted a nationalist exclusivism that was also manifested in the Albanian and in other Balkan national contexts (covered below). How did this happen?

In the context of socialist Yugoslavia, the idea of a particular "Macedonian house" was put forth by a scholarly work that not only recalls the theory of the "Bosnian house" by the Croat Juraj Neidhardt and the Slovene Dušan Grabrijan but was actually written by the latter. In his 1955 book on the Macedonian traditional dwelling,[115] Grabrijan followed the same logic of interpretation as in his book with Neidhardt. The clichés concerning the "Orient" are also there. As he had with the Bosnians, Grabrijan proclaims the Macedonians to be a cultural

113 For instance, his family house in Skopje (1938), today "Macedonian House" (*Makedonska kukja*).

114 Macedonian scholars often quote, for instance, the voluminous work of the Bulgarian author Vasiliev, *Bălgarski văzrozhdenski maystori*.

115 Dušan Grabrijan, *Makedonska kukja, ili preod od stara orientalska vo sovremena evropska kukja* (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1955). Grabrijan's study was published in Slovenian, Serbo-Croatian, and Macedonian. Here I refer to the Macedonian version from 1986 (Skopje: Misla).

link between Europe and the Orient, while he calls the "Macedonian house" a "European house," although one closely related to the "Oriental house."[116]

What is the difference between all these kinds of dwellings, and what, in the end, are the specific traits of the Macedonian house? Grabrijan does not seem sure. He frankly admits his position as an outside observer, a Slovene who knows Bosnia well but not Macedonia, and he even asks local people what they believe about the origin of their houses. His book contains interesting descriptions of the reactions of Macedonians concerning the local traditional houses. In some cases, locals allegedly believed that the master builders were "Albanians (*Arnauti*) and Turks." However, some emphasized the activity of the builders from the Debar region—especially those from the village of Galičnik. At this point Grabrijan reports the following popular saying, which became almost compulsory in Macedonian scholarly works on traditional architecture: "If Istanbul falls down, Debar will build it again. If Debar disappears, even Istanbul will not be able to rebuild it."[117] Some Macedonians supposed that the same house architecture had to have Roman and Byzantine roots.

In fact, as we will see, these replies mirror quite well points of interpretation that dominate the mainstream history of architecture in Yugoslav Macedonia. On the one hand, there is an emphasis on master builders as creators and continuators of vernacular traditions. On the other hand, there are vague references to Byzantine and even to more ancient archetypes of the same traditions. The difference between the "Macedonian house" (which Grabrijan treats as exclusively Christian) and the "Oriental house" nevertheless remained uncertain: the Slovene architect frankly admitted that he sometimes believed a given house was Macedonian until the owner stated that it was previously Muslim, as he had bought it from a Turk.[118] Facing such difficulties, Grabrijan came to the conclusion that the distinctiveness of the "Macedonian house" with regard to the "Oriental house" was due to a basic difference in the dominant way of life. Namely, the "Macedonian house" was more European, as it was more oriented towards an active and creative way of life: it was a more "working-oriented" house (*povekje "rabotnička," odnosno pogodna za rabota*). Thus the "Macedonian house" was somehow, as Grabrijan put it, "more domestic" (*podomašna*) than the "Oriental house," which was meant more "for pleasure" (*povekje "merakliska," napravena za uživanje*).[119]

116 Grabrijan, *Makedonska kukja*, 200.

117 Ibid., 31.

118 Ibid., 33.

119 Ibid., 33–34, 57.

Needless to say, Dušan Grabrijan's vision was Orientalist. The utter impossibility of tracing a convincing difference between the Macedonian (Christian) and the Muslim ("Oriental") house—apart from the presence of home bath (*hamam*) in the latter, or the distinction between *selamlık* and *harem*(*lik*)—resulted in a highly idiosyncratic theory. Yet Grabrijan's book had a certain impact on the development of Macedonian architectural history and practice, especially with his discovery of "modern" traits in the traditional Macedonian dwelling. Similarly to his joint work with Neidhardt on the "Bosnian house," Grabrijan drew comparisons between various elements of the vernacular house architecture and the Modernist designs of Le Corbusier and Adolf Loos. The presence of characteristics in traditional houses that were especially praised in Modernism ("architecture of human scale," "relationship to nature," etc.[120]) encouraged the modern architects of Yugoslav Macedonia to find inspiration in the vernacular architecture of their native country. Indeed, Macedonian architects in the socialist Yugoslav period deliberately placed traditional elements in their projects (stories in projection in the upper levels, wooden cladding, long eaves, etc.)—in a more literal and imitative way (the Stokovna Kukja Most by Tihomir Arsovski, Skopje, 1977) or as references in a Modernist design (the building of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts by Boris Čipan, Skopje, 1976).

As far as architectural history is concerned, the interpretation of the vernacular heritage was articulated in an original way in 1960 with the publication of the book *Macedonian Folk Architecture* by Sotir Tomoski. An architect who had received his training in Serbia, Tomoski was one of the leading specialists advocating the study and the preservation of the traditional architectural heritage in Yugoslav Macedonia. Tomoski's monograph attempted to define what he called the "Macedonian school of architecture" (*makedonska arhitektonska škola*): the sum of creations of the "popular genius," which manifested itself all over Macedonia, as well as elsewhere in the Balkan peninsula, Romania, and even Asia Minor, thanks to the activity of Macedonian master builders.

The general perspective of Tomoski's study seems undoubtedly nationalistic. He believed that "Macedonian folk architecture" was wrongly labeled "Balkan architecture," given that it was Macedonian master builders, especially those from the "Debar school," who spread it everywhere. At the same time, there were no foreign builders in Macedonia.[121] As Tomoski dated the beginning of the "Debar school" to the (late) seventeenth century, the master builders

120 The same concepts appear in a study by the Macedonian architect Krum Tomovski more than forty years later: see *Etnologija na Makedoncite* (Skopje: MANU, 1996), 105.

121 Sotir Tomoski, *Makedonska narodna arhitektura* (Skopje: Tehnički fakultet, 1960), 6.

belonging to it obviously had enough time to disseminate their style all over the Balkans and Asia Minor. According to Tomoski, it was only the urban houses outside Macedonia that looked Macedonian: the rural architecture of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Greece was different because local builders worked in the villages there. Tomoski explained that Vlach merchants from Bitola, Kruševo, Salonika, and other Macedonian towns founded colonies in Ankara, Smyrna, Bursa, and Istanbul. These merchants took master builders from their native land to build houses for them in their new places of residence (*majstori od spomenatite sela odele so niv za da im gradat kukji*).[122] That is why urban house architecture in the Balkans and in Asia Minor looks so similar to the one in Macedonia. To support his claims, Tomoski quoted the Serbian scholar Kojić and Bulgarian specialists such as Todor Zlatev, who emphasized the importance of Macedonian builders.

While there might be nothing surprising in this nationalistic maximalism, Tomoski's interpretation appeared odd and full of contradictions on many points. For instance, he believed that Macedonian masters learned the arts of architecture, woodcarving, and icon painting in the Greek context—not only in (what later became) Greek Macedonia but also in Thrace, Mount Athos, and "Old Greece." A key date in his interpretation is the year 1689, when Skopje was burned down by the Austrian general Piccolomini. Tomoski claimed that the first Macedonian master builders appeared after that: as local people had to rebuild their city (or cities), they started traveling to Mount Athos and Greece, where they got acquainted with local architecture. The latter was, not surprisingly, Greek: according to Tomoski, Macedonian masters took their models from Greek popular architecture, which was itself based on Byzantine traditions. He defined as Byzantine the building style in Galičnik—the village in the Debar region where houses have solid stone construction, at least at the lower levels.

But the author did not stop there. Intriguingly, Sotir Tomoski believed that Macedonian master builders were particularly inspired by ancient—*Classical* Greek—architecture. He indicated the presence, in some vernacular houses in Macedonia, of triangular pediments, as well as of other components that he identified with ancient Greek architectonic elements (such as architraves and friezes). Going by Tomoski, one reaches the paradoxical conclusion that Macedonian folk architecture is even closer to classical Greece than Greek traditional architecture is: he believed that Macedonian master builders used the

122 Tomoski, *Makedonska narodna arhitektura*, 31–33. The same theses were republished decades later in *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Narodna arhitektura* (Skopje: MANU, 2000), 18.

porches of the ancient Greek temples much more in their designs than their Greek contemporaries did.[123]

Yet all that did not mean that Tomoski denied the original characteristics of Macedonian folk architecture. According to him, the Macedonian builders did not copy Greek models but developed them, as "every people builds according to its own needs, customs, and habits."[124] Echoing Grabrijan, he also praised the "modern" qualities of the traditional "Macedonian house" and did not fail to indicate that Le Corbusier was inspired by it. Curiously, Tomoski emphasized as a particularly modern element the glass covering of the verandas in some houses—the same glass façades that inspired Constantin Joja in Romania.[125]

The interpretation Sotir Tomoski proposed might seem highly idiosyncratic. In reality, it stems from an entanglement of diverse theses previously put forth by scholars from different Balkan countries. It should be noted that Jovan Cvijić already mentioned the particular manner of building of Galičnik houses in his considerations of the "Greek-Mediterranean house," which he believed to be of Byzantine origin.[126] As seen above, in Serbian literature, references to Byzantine roots are quite common. In addition, the heritage of Vardar Macedonia is seen as particularly related to Byzantine and "Greek-Mediterranean" traditions. Some Serbian works refer to an ancient Greek type of building—the *megaron*—as a possible archetype of vernacular houses in Serbia and in Macedonia.[127]

Tomoski also referred to the works of the Bulgarian author Georgi Traychev, himself a native of Macedonia. In a book about the traditions of the Debar region,[128] Traychev stated that the first masters learned their crafts in Mount Athos and Salonika. He also believed that the emblematic village of Galičnik was founded by people from the Gallikos River area, not far from Salonika. Moreover, Sotir Tomoski was acquainted with works of Greek specialists, who—as we will see—emphasized the historical continuity between Byzantine and Greek popular architecture. Tomoski quoted the studies of

123 Tomoski, *Makedonska narodna arhitektura*, 27.

124 Ibid., 53.

125 Ibid., 78.

126 Cvijić, *La Péninsule balkanique*, 245.

127 Petrović, *Narodna arhitektura. Doksati i čardaci*, 21. This reference appeared in the interwar period in works on the "Greek-Oriental type" of houses in the regions of Morava and Vardar: Richard Staudinger, "Kuća grčko-orijentalnog tipa u moravsko-vardarskoj oblasti," *Glasnik Geografskog društva* 18 (1932): 46–56.

128 Georgi Traychev, *Kniga za miyatsite* (Sofia, 1941); see also Georgi Traychev, *Manastirite v Makedoniya* (Sofia, 1933).

archaeologist Anastasios Orlandos on the Byzantine town of Mystras, as well as the works of architect Panos Tzelepis (Djelepy) on Greek traditional architecture (published in French). Thus Tomoski was able to find the archetype of the Galičnik houses in Mystras.

To a large extent, the "Greek" interpretation that Tomoski proposes is also the result of an eminently Eurocentric approach. In the studies he had access to, ancient Greek and Roman models were treated as the universal source of all "European" architectural styles. As we have already seen in the case of Austrian Orientalism in Bosnia, the "non-European" traditions—such as "Islamic architecture"—were often presented in quite a rudimentary manner in these studies. Ottoman Turkish architecture in particular attracted little interest, and it was generally seen as derivative of Arabian, Persian, and Byzantine styles. Tomoski shared this contempt. He stated that when the Turks arrived in Asia Minor, they did not have their own architectural tradition and used Persian and Byzantine models for their monumental buildings; for their residential buildings, they followed the traditions of the local populations and employed local, particularly Macedonian, builders.

Yet Tomoski also tried to distinguish the "Macedonian house"—implicitly considered Christian—from the Muslim houses. These he deemed *a priori* different, as they were influenced by "Muslim architecture." The problem nevertheless seems especially complicated in the case of the "urban Macedonian house," which seems very similar to the Muslim house. Here, Tomoski used an argument that is quite frequent in Balkan theories (aside from the Turkish ones). He emphasized that Muslim houses were supposed to protect domestic life from the gaze of strangers: they are allegedly not open towards the street, their windows have trellises (*kafes*), and so on. Macedonian houses, by contrast, are open to the public space. They are joyful, unlike the Turkish houses, which are closed in and create a tense feeling.[129] Ironically, several photos in his monograph show houses that belonged to Muslims and that are actually oriented towards the street. Tomoski admitted that, in some cases, few elements distinguish Muslim houses from Macedonian (Christian) houses. In a number of Muslim dwellings, there is no clear separation into *selamlık* and *haremlik*; sometimes, only the trellis over the windows indicates that the house belonged to a Muslim family.[130] In fact, Tomoski's approach shows that many Balkan specialists are relatively uninterested in the general Ottoman context: several general truths about "Turkish houses" are constantly repeated even when the actual data contradict them.

129 Tomoski, *Makedonska narodna arhitektura*, 31–33.

130 Ibid., 47.

Despite his emphasis on Greek folk architecture, Tomoski's knowledge is limited there as well. For instance, it is not true that rural houses in Greece are necessarily different from (Slav) Macedonian houses and that it is only Greek urban houses that may be similar. Tomoski's claim that specific Macedonian "schools" of builders—particularly the "Debar school"—appeared as early as the seventeenth century is pure speculation. In fact, there are data suggesting that the rural population in the Mala Reka/Debar area was relatively late in turning towards seasonal labor in other places and switching to "artistic" crafts such as building, woodcarving, and icon painting. According to another Macedonian scholar, Krum Tomovski, the first dwellings in Galičnik were relatively simple huts. It was in the nineteenth century that their design developed, and it was by the turn of the twentieth century that the Galičnik houses acquired their "Byzantine" appearance of stone-built towers.[131] There is most likely no ancient architectural tradition behind the otherwise impressive skills of the people from the Debar region, and Tomoski's idea that local builders were acquainted with Classical Greek architecture and imported it from Greece looks clearly anachronistic. There are, indeed, (Neo-)Classical elements in the architecture of Ottoman Macedonia. However, as critics of Tomoski emphasized, these appeared late, and they represent Western influences that found their way into Greece itself only in the nineteenth century.[132]

Not surprisingly, this first codification of the theory of "Macedonian folk architecture" was not accepted by other scholars in Yugoslav Macedonia. Another great authority in the field of Macedonian vernacular heritage explicitly rejected it—Boris Čipan, former student of Branislav Kojić and of Aleksandar Deroko in Belgrade. He openly criticized Tomoski's approach as an expression of "sentimental-nationalistic trends."[133] Čipan argued against appropriating the Balkan house type as uniquely Macedonian; he pointed out that the same architecture existed among almost all peoples of the Balkan peninsula and of Asia Minor. In fact, Čipan repeated many theses of his teacher Kojić, such as the idea that the vernacular Balkan house had roots in the Byzantine house. According to Čipan, the Turks adopted it, but they were able to change only secondary elements of it. Here he included among the "primary" (allegedly Byzantine) elements the position of a "hall" at the center

131 See *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Narodna arhitektura*, 163. The same was true of the other crafts: in the 1830s, the population of Mala Reka still invited masters from other places, such as the Vlach Michail (from Samarina, now in Greek Macedonia), to paint the icons in local churches.

132 See Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 68.

133 *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Narodna arhitektura*, 25.

of the building and the organization of the other rooms around it. It should be noted that such a plan is regarded in Turkish studies (and elsewhere) as a typical feature of Ottoman residential architecture, one that even has Central Asian roots.[134] At the same time, Boris Čipan, like Tomoski, emphasized the role of Slavic master builders and even claimed that their designs followed old Slavic architectural know-how (*gradežništvo*). Thus while the Turks took the Byzantine house as a model, the "Christian house" in Macedonia was a "logical continuation of the medieval Slavic house."[135]

Thus, ironically, while criticizing his Macedonian colleague for his "sentimental nationalism," Čipan proposed a more nationalistic interpretation. Tomoski was, however, postulating the existence of a Greek archetype, not a Slavic one. Moreover, Čipan's distinction between the "Slavic house" and the "Byzantine house" only compounds the problem. While the latter is only partially known (and, of course, it had several variations and evolved a great deal throughout the Byzantine Empire's thousand years of existence), the former is even less known despite some (problematic) descriptions by Byzantine writers and reconstructions by contemporary archaeologists. And not surprisingly, Čipan faced the same problem as Tomoski: the two house types—"Christian" and "Turkish"—are quite similar to each other. This Čipan resolved by proposing that the "formal unity" of the two types was the result of several centuries of Turkish domination. Still, insisted Čipan, the Turkish (i.e., Byzantine) and the Christian (i.e., Slavic) house are essentially "two different conceptions."

Boris Čipan's theories, which were idiosyncratic like those of Tomoski, were likewise not embraced by other Macedonian scholars. The mainstream Macedonian interpretation of vernacular architectural heritage remained somewhat fluid. In general, Macedonian authors use various terms for the traditional house type as synonyms: "Balkan house" (*balkanska kukja*), "folk house" (*narodna kukja*), "old urban house" (*starogradska kukja*), and "(old) Macedonian house" ([*stara*] *makedonska kukja*). Some also speak of a "Balkan-Oriental house" (*balkansko-orientalna kukja*) and insist on its close relationship to Ottoman domination.[136] Others stress "Turkish" influences but still

134 On centrality as category in Ottoman house architecture: Alain Borrie and Pierre Pinon, "La maison ottomane: une centralité inachevée?" in *Espace centré: figures de l'architecture domestique dans l'Orient méditerranéen = Les cahiers de la recherche architecturale* 20–21 (1987): 62–71.

135 *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Narodna arhitektura*, 26.

136 Aneta Svetieva, "Rezbareni tavani, dolapi i vrati," in *Etnologija na Makedoncite*, 121–128.

seek the origin of the local house architecture in the Byzantine Empire.[137] Here the Yugoslav imprint on Macedonian theories is visible again. But some Macedonian authors also consulted more recent Greek literature insisting on Byzantine prototypes, such as the works of Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, which will be analyzed later.[138]

At the same time, some specialists connect vernacular architecture in Macedonia with the "National Revival" or "Rebirth" (*prerodba*) period[139]—roughly the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century—which is associated with the development of a particular Macedonian identity. As we will see, the practice of crediting the development of the vernacular architecture to a particular period of national "awakening" is typical of Albanian and even more of Bulgarian interpretations. More recent books also use the specific term "Macedonian [National] Revival architecture" (*makedonska prerodbenska arhitektura*).[140] In this case, we can clearly suppose a conceptual influence from Bulgarian scholarship, which defines the local traditional dwellings in Bulgaria—and in Macedonia—as "Bulgarian [National] Revival architecture."[141]

Yet despite these influences from diverse directions, a more or less common perspective of interpretation crystallized, and it is clearly nationally oriented. This perspective could be found in the works of authors such as Krum Tomovski (also a student of Kojić) or Petar Namičev, who otherwise demonstrate a more descriptive approach towards vernacular house heritage. The references to the medieval Slavic house and the Byzantine house are present in their works but not really developed. The local architectural heritage is instead "Macedonized" by ignoring Ottoman parallels. Comparisons with heritage outside Macedonia are rare. This exclusion of the Balkan or the Ottoman context gives the impression that the "Macedonian house" is unique and that its elements (*çardak, köşk, divanhane*, etc.) typically belong to it alone. Indeed, in some cases, Macedonian authors establish parallels between vernacular features in Macedonia and in the other Balkan countries, but they tend to explain these by saying that

137 E.g., Gurgica Lekovska, "Function and Form of Vernacular Architecture in FYROM," in *Valkaniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, 109–115.

138 For instance, Petar Namičev, "Erkerot kako tradicionalen izrazen element vo selskata arhitektura vo Makedonija," *Etnolog* 3 (1993): 32–52.

139 Cf. Mihail Tokarev in *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Od sredinata na XIX do krajot na XX vek*, 11–13.

140 Tomovski, *Makedonskite majstori-graditeli od devetnaesettiot vek*, 13; Krum Tomovski and Vangel Božinovski, *Protomajstorot Gjorgji Novakov-Džongar* (Skopje: MANU, 2008), 10.

141 On the concept of "National Revival" in Bulgarian historiography, and in Balkan historiographies in general, see Alexander Vezenkov and Tchavdar Marinov's study in vol. 3 of *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*.

Macedonian master builders worked there. For instance, although he admits that Macedonian masters might have been influenced by "foreign" models as well, Namičev prefers to study the particularities of the "Macedonian house" as an expression of "the rich and autochthonous architectural tradition of our builders."[142] In general, the scholars from the former Yugoslav republic seek the "Macedonian stylistic expression" in architecture and are interested only in what they call the "Macedonian architectural school."[143]

In some cases, they insist that Macedonia had its own architectural school as early as the medieval period and that it greatly influenced the neighboring countries, especially Serbia.[144] But they also maintain that monuments from the ancient Greco-Roman era had a certain importance: the Macedonian master builders allegedly synthesized all these influences into a specific architectural expression and "school."[145] Currently, there is an interesting trend to this effect that seeks to resurrect Sotir Tomoski's theory about the ancient roots of Macedonian vernacular architecture. Yet this time these roots are by no means Greek: they are *ancient Macedonian*. This slight "correction" is not at all surprising, given that the Republic of Macedonia has been trapped, for more than two decades, in a controversy with its southern neighbor concerning its official name. In parallel, the official state-sponsored nationalism in the country has recently promoted the theory of an uninterrupted continuity between ancient and modern Macedonia—an evolution that its opponents label "antiquization" (*antikvizacija*).

For instance, Petar Muličkoski, one of the leading architects of the country from the Yugoslav socialist period, recently "discovered" a clear relationship between the local vernacular architecture and that of ancient Macedonia of Philip II and Alexander the Great. As ancient Macedonian civilization cannot be inferior to the Turkish one, it is obvious—according to the author—that the Turks adopted the Macedonian architectural tradition alongside the

142 Namičev, "Erkerot kako tradicionalen izrazen," 51. If mentioned at all, the Ottoman context is brought up mostly in connection with urban architecture: cf. Petar Namičev, *Tradicionalna gradska arhitektura* (Skopje: Muzej na Makedonija, 2004); Petar Namičev, *Razvoj na selskata kukja vo Makedonija* (Skopje: Muzej na Makedonija, 2007).

143 *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Od sredinata na XIX do krajot na XX vek*, 17–18.

144 *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Srednovekovna crkvena arhitektura. Islamska arhitektura* (Skopje: MANU, 2000), 57–58. The analysis of this theory goes beyond the scope of the present study, as the claims in question concern mostly medieval Orthodox religious architecture. It can only be noted that, in this case, Macedonian authors are actually "nationalizing" the description of a particular Macedonian *Byzantine* artistic style previously launched in the international studies of Byzantine art.

145 *Arhitekturata na počvata na Makedonija. Narodna arhitektura*, 7.

"Roman-Byzantine" traditions. In fact, Roman and Byzantine architecture have Macedonian roots as well.[146] In the same spirit, authors such as the architect Vangel Božinovski claim that Macedonian architecture has a historical continuity "of at least 8,000 years"—since the Neolithic period. Furthermore, according to Božinovski, it is incorrect to use terms such as "Turkish" or "Byzantine" for the "Macedonian stylistic expression." The author even rejects the term "Hellenistic architecture," as he states that this architecture was a legacy of ancient Macedonian civilization.[147]

Many of the Macedonian specialists' claims might sound far-fetched. Yet as we saw, in many cases, these are the outcome of a bricolage of theses that have been formulated in other national contexts—particularly in the former Yugoslavia. At the same time, the Macedonian case shows certain strategies of appropriation of the Ottoman-era architectural heritage that will be presented in the cases below. One of these strategies is the central reference to the native master builders, who are considered perpetuators of a purely autochthonous architectural tradition. This reference is exploited in a number of Balkan histories of architecture, yet not so much (or even not at all) in the Romanian, Serbian, and Bosnian cases. In fact, surprising as it may seem, the Macedonian appropriation of the Balkan/Ottoman house heritage is by no means the most exclusivist-nationalist one.

Kulla, çardak, qoshk: The Definition of the "Albanian House"

The case of Albania is similar in some respects to those of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Republic of Macedonia. As already mentioned, in Albania as well, local architectural heritage was first studied by foreigners—particularly by travelers and scholars coming from the Habsburg Empire. Just as in the case of Bosnia, this interest was also political and related to Vienna's ambition to dominate the Western Balkans. From the mid-nineteenth century until World War I, the Empire encouraged the construction of an Albanian national identity, as well as the creation of a pro-Austrian-oriented elite in the Ottoman vilayets

146 Petar Muličkoski, *Duhot na makedonskata kukja* (Skopje: AEA Izdavači, 2000), 17, 22–25.

147 Tomovski and Božinovski, *Protomajstorot Gjorgji Novakov-Džongar*, 149–151. These claims are most likely from Vangel Božinovski: he has been one of the chief promoters of the pharaonic project "Skopje 2014," which substantially reshaped Skopje's city center over the past several years.

populated by Albanians.[148] Apart from Albanian history and language, Austro-Hungarian scholars researched diverse aspects of the traditional culture of Albanians, including traditional house architecture.

From among the first scholars who provided descriptions of the "Albanian house," one must mention the diplomat and the founder of Albanian studies Johann Georg von Hahn,[149] the ethnographer Arthur Haberlandt,[150] and most of all, the unusual figure of the Transylvanian Baron Franz (Ferencz) Nopcsa, who dedicated himself to the research fields of both paleontology and Albanology.[151] Not coincidentally, some of the works on the Albanian traditional way of life and cultural heritage from that period were published in the Austro-Hungarian center of Balkan studies—the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo. Scholars such as the archaeologist and Balkanologist Carl Patsch[152] worked on the heritage of both Bosnia and Albania. Some of the first Albanian intellectuals also showed an interest in their country's cultural and architectural heritage. This was the case for the politician and writer Eqrem bej Vlora, whose work *Aus Berat und vom Tomor* was published in Sarajevo as well.[153]

Defining the "Albanian house" is nevertheless far from easy. In the Ottoman era, Albanians (or Albanian-speakers) lived in a number of regions with very different social and cultural characteristics, going well beyond the division between the "Geg" North vs. the "Tosk" South that is so often mentioned in scholarly and popular literature.[154] Respectively, the vernacular architectural heritage of Albania is far less homogenous than that in the Republic of Macedonia and no less diverse than those in Bosnia or Serbia. Similarly to Dalmatia and Herzegovina, stone houses are typical of the Albanian Adriatic

148 On the construction of Albanian national identity and the role of Austria-Hungary in the process: Nathalie Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais. La naissance d'une nation majoritairement musulmane en Europe* (Paris: Karthala, 2007).

149 Johann Georg von Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, vols. 1–3 (Jena: Mauke, 1854).

150 Arthur Haberlandt, *Kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Volkskunde von Montenegro, Albanien und Serbien* (Vienna: Verein für österreichische Volkskunde, 1917).

151 See, in particular, Baron Franz Nopcsa, *Haus und Hausrat im katholischen Nordalbanien* (Sarajevo: Institut für Balkanforschung, 1912); Baron Franz Nopcsa, *Albanien. Bauten, Trachten und Geräte Nordalbaniens* (Berlin and Leipzig: De Gruyter, 1925).

152 Conservator in the *Landesmuseum* and founder of the *Institut für Balkanforschung*: after World War I, he was invited to Tirana to organize the Albanian national museum. See Nathalie Clayer, "Carl Patsch et le Musée national de Tirana (1922–1925). Construction nationale et expertise archéologique," *Revue germanique internationale* 16 (2012): 91–104.

153 Ekrem Bey Vlora, *Aus Berat und vom Tomor. Tagebuchblätter* (Sarajevo: Kajon, 1911).

154 On regional particularities: Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais*, 59–131.

littoral. Moreover, they are frequently found in other Albanian-populated areas, including the region of Kosovo/Kosova and Metohija/Rrafshi i Dukagjinit.

Scholarly interest has been especially piqued by the famous Albanian fortified houses known as *kulla* that are found mainly in the northern half of Albania and in the Rrafshi i Dukagjinit. As already mentioned, the term *kulla* is used in the rest of the Balkans as well (*kula* in the Balkan Slavic languages, *culă* in Romanian, *koulia*/*koulas* in Greek, *kule* in Turkish). Diverse types of fortified houses are found in various parts of the Balkans that were governed by autonomous rulers and/or had big landowners and which experienced long periods of instability—such as Mani and Pelion in Greece, Oltenia in Romania, northwestern Bulgaria (the town of Vratsa), and the town of Kratovo in the Republic of Macedonia. It is nevertheless true that fortified mansions are very common in Albanian-populated provinces and thus give them a specific architectural appearance.

Yet most of the Albanian urban centers feature timber-framed architecture of Balkan type, with the fine stone masonry limited to the house's lower level(s) or fence. One example is the architecture of the museum town of Berat. Often, however, there is no clear distinction between *kulla* and the timber-framed house. In the region of Dibra, *kulla*s might also have a wooden construction on their upper level known by the Ottoman name of *çardak*. In the southern town of Gjirokastër (Argyrokastro), the center of what is regarded in Greece as Northern Epirus, impressive houses of Balkan or Ottoman style have huge stone-built lower levels that give them the aspect of fortifications.

Moreover, in the last couple of decades of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, the townscape in places such as Shkodër, the big center of the north, or Durrës and Vlorë on the Adriatic coast underwent a process of "Europeanization" with the introduction of eclectic architectural elements derived from Western academic styles. The architecture of Korçë, an important commercial, artisanal, and cultural center, administratively and culturally part of the Macedonian area, adopted Greek Neo-Classical models in particular.[155] It should be noted that, as elsewhere in the Balkans, European academic influences did not arrive directly from Western Europe but were

155 On these late changes in the urban setting and the architectural outlook: Zija Shkodra, *La ville albanaise au cours de la Renaissance nationale* (Tirana: Académie des sciences, 1988), 171–176. For a standard presentation of the Albanian vernacular house types and their evolution: Emin Riza and Pirro Thomo, *Albanie* (Athens: Melissa, 1990), an album from the series *Architecture traditionnelle des Balkans*.

mediated by the important urban centers of the region—primarily Istanbul, but also Athens and Bucharest.[156]

In this context, the first scholars of Albanian culture had the difficult task of selecting the type of dwelling that was to be regarded as the most representative of Albanian identity. Seen as backward by all others in Europe, Albania nevertheless did not have the same pattern of Orientalist aura as Bosnia. It must be taken into account that, unlike Bosniaks, Albanians belong(ed) to different confessions: Sunni Islam, Heterodox Islam (mainly Bektashism), Orthodox Christianity, and Catholicism. Catholics were especially supported by European powers, particularly by Austria-Hungary. Moreover, in Western descriptions, there was often something medieval and chivalrous in the image of Albanians as mountain dwellers with an old custom law; their association with the figure of Skanderbeg only reinforced this image.[157] When Carl Patsch tried to envision the future building of the Albanian national museum—which, he thought, must be in a "national style"—he evoked the architecture of Kruja, the stronghold of Skanderbeg.[158] Haberlandt and Nopcsa also "discovered" medieval Italian influences in the Albanian vernacular house types.

After World War I, Austria ceded its cultural and political influence to the country that was Vienna's main rival in the Albanian regions even before the Balkan Wars and the creation of an Albanian state in 1912. This was Italy. The young Albanian state found itself increasingly dependent—economically and politically—on Rome until, in 1939, Mussolini installed a puppet government in Tirana and transformed the country into an Italian Fascist protectorate. As a result, between the mid-1920s and 1943, Albania hosted a number of Italian urban planners and architects who left an important legacy in Albanian towns. The first master plans were elaborated and applied during that period, and a series of modern public buildings designed

156 Bucharest had an important influence on Korçë, a town with considerable worker migration to the Romanian capital. Similarly to Bucharest, Korçë was named the "Little Paris (of the Orient)" despite its modest dimensions: Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais*, 125.

157 See, for instance, Henry N. Brailsford, *Macedonia: Its Races and Their Future* (London: Methuen and Co., 1906): "It is extremely mediaeval, no doubt, this Albanian sense of honour, but if it has the crudity and bloody-mindedness, it has also the chivalry and something of the inward dignity of the knightly spirit" (225); "They are Nietzsche's over-men, these primitive Albanians—something between kings and tigers" (239).

158 Clayer, "Carl Patsch et le Musée national de Tirana," 97.

by Italian architects—erected primarily in Tirana and Durrës—were supposed to display various ideological messages.[159]

There certainly was not a homogenous Italian "Fascist" or "colonial style" in Albania: in some cases, the buildings designed by Italian specialists were amazingly Modernist, while, in other cases, they were rather historicist (e.g., the Neo-Renaissance ensemble around Skanderbeg Square and the Viale Mussolini—today Dëshmorët e Kombit Boulevard). In both cases, as a courtesy to Albanian nationalism and a reference to *genius loci*, Italian architects tried to include Albanian "national elements" in their projects—for instance, symbols of Skanderbeg or references to (what was imagined as) the Albanian vernacular architecture. The most notorious example is the Casa del Fascio in Tirana (designed by Gherardo Bosio in 1940—today the Rectorate of the Polytechnic University), whose vertical volume is allegedly a reference to an Albanian *kulla*.[160] The Ottoman house type was visibly not privileged in the Italian designs.

Albanian vernacular heritage was much more actively instrumentalized after World War II, this time in the context of communist rule. As early as 1948, Enver Hoxha, the Albanian party and state leader, emphasized that the construction of modern buildings in the country "should take into account our vernacular style (*stilin popullor*)."[161] This was the period when architecture in Eastern European countries was supposed to follow the (nebulous) Stalinist formula of art "socialist in content," but "national in form." Although from

159 An analysis of the complex messages of the Italian "colonial" architecture from that period certainly exceeds the scope of the present study. It must be noted nevertheless that, in this case as well, Modernism stimulated a certain interest in vernacular traditions. In interwar Italy, this interest was inspired in particular by the architecture *senza architetti* of Southern Italy, the Greek islands, and the Northern African littoral. It was considered an expression of the "Mediterranean roots" of civilization and was also linked to the Roman grandeur (the *Romanità*). On Italian architects and urban planners in Albania, see Maria Adriana Giusti, *Albania: architettura e città 1925–1943* (Florence: Maschietto, 2006); *Shekulli XX Secolo. Arkitektura italianë në Shqipëri. Architettura italiana in Albania. Italian Architecture in Albania*, ed. Maria Adriana Giusti (Pisa: ETS, 2010); Ariola Prifti, "The Realization of the 'New Architecture': The Italian Colonial Experience in Albania During the Years 1925–1943," *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 9 (2013), 648–654, http://www.mcser.org/journal/index.php/ajis/article/viewFile/901/932 (accessed January 20, 2015).

160 Giusti, *Albania: architettura e città*, 46, quoted by Indrit Bleta, "Influences of Political Regime Shifts on the Urban Scene of a Capital City: Case Study: Tirana" (MA thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2010), 64.

161 Bleta, "Influences of Political Regime Shifts," 74.

the 1960s on, just like in the other communist countries, Stalinist Academism in architecture gave way to a certain form of socialist Modernism, Hoxha's regime never broke with Stalinism, and Albania spent a long period under this extremely isolationist and nationalist regime. This fact had certain repercussions in the architecture of public buildings that, in a number of cases, included references to vernacular forms. A reference to a salient Ottoman or Balkan element can be found in the design of the Palace of Congresses in Tirana, which was completed in 1986 after a project by the architect Klement Kolaneci. The building has a specific corbeled upper level in projection, inspired by a traditional house on the main commercial street of old Gjirokastër.[162]

The regime's nationalistic policy stimulated scholarly and public interest in vernacular architecture. This applied particularly to secular architecture, as religion was seen not only as contrary to Marxism-Leninism, but also as contributing to the division of the Albanian people. (Indeed, the practice of religion was banned starting in 1967.) During Enver Hoxha's rule, Albania obtained an institutional framework for heritage protection; in 1961, Berat and Gjirokastër (which was also Hoxha's birthplace) were declared museum towns in order to be added later to the World Heritage List. In the context of this prizing of heritage, the history of architecture developed as a scholarly discipline for the first time in the Albanian context.[163] The description and typologies of vernacular houses proposed by Albanian scholars were naturally based on earlier works—mainly those by Austro-Hungarian authors. Baron Nopcsa's contributions in particular are prominent in the new scholarly literature—even the drawings in his works are frequently used.

The newly codified Albanian history of architecture nevertheless had a problematic feature: local scholars put the ethnically understood national identity at the center of their analysis. The presence of external borrowings and influences in Albanian architecture, once sought by foreign scholars, was rejected. The interpretations from the communist period faithfully mirrored the dominant ideology: they were both Marxist-Leninist in approach (or at least in rhetoric) and nationally autarkic and autochthonist. Vernacular (mainly house) architecture was extensively studied by, among others, two prolific architects—Emin Riza and Pirro Thomo—as well as by the historian

162 Bineri, "'Negative' Cultural Heritage: Destruction or Conservation?," 544; Bleta, "Influences of Political Regime Shifts," 92.

163 See the academic history of Albanian architecture: *Historia e arkitekturës shqiptare*, eds. Apollon Baçe et al. (Tirana: Ministria e Arsimit dhe e Kulturës, 1980).

FIGURE 7.5 *An urban* kulla: *the Zekate House in Gjirokastër* (*1812*).

Zija Shkodra. As these authors seem to be the most influential, they deserve special attention here.

The topic of their works is clearly stated in the titles: "Albanian architecture," "Albanian house," "Albanian dwelling" (*banesa shqiptare*), and so on. Otherwise, much of Riza's and Thomo's analyses is dedicated to typologies. Like the other Balkan specialists, they make a distinction between rural and urban architecture; the first one has a number of regional subtypes, among which the authors put the different versions of fortified mansions (*kulla*). Riza also divides urban architecture into several subtypes: dwellings organized around a fireplace room (this room is itself called "house"—*shtëpia e zjarrit*), typical for Tirana; dwellings with *hajat* (or *hayat* in Turkish); dwellings with *çardak*; and urban *kulla*s, as these were characteristic of Gjirokastër. In his description of urban houses, Zija Shkodra prefers geographical typologies, such as "house of Shkodër" or "house of Kosova and Dibra." When discussing typological distinctions, Albanian authors praise both the diversity and the "unity" of the vernacular heritage in their country.

In fact, in many cases, the difference between rural and urban is far from obvious. *Kulla*s, for instance, are ultimately both. Rural and urban houses share a number of architectonic elements such as the *hajat*, the *çardak*, or the *qoshk*—all these being, in reality, Ottoman terms (*hayat, çardak, köşk*). Also common are other elements of their plans: the fireplace "house" (*shtëpia e zjarrit*), the *divanhane*, or the existence of a specific room for guests (*oda*

e miqve, "room for friends," or *oda e mirë*, the "good room")[164] in the bigger houses. In Albanian works, the terms *selamlık* and *harem* rarely appear, giving the impression that Albanian scholars also avoid making parallels with the well-known organization of the Muslim dwelling in the Ottoman context.

In any case, the similarities between rural and urban heritage allow the Albanian authors to postulate a historical evolution from simple to complex dwellings, and from rural to urban. In this manner, the various types of Albanian houses are seen as instances of a purely autochthonous development. As Pirro Thomo states, "we do not witness any import of types or of ready-made forms. The simple dwellings follow a natural way of evolution and [. . .] they arrive at higher architectonic conceptions."[165] The "autochthonous" traits of Albanian vernacular architecture are further demonstrated with the help of three strategies of interpretation that we saw in Macedonian context, at least partially, and that we will see in the next national contexts as well.

The first one could be described as *elimination of the Ottoman context*: it is simply not present and thematized. When it is referred to at all, it is mainly as a source of oppression and destruction.[166] This exclusion of the Ottoman context—and the Balkan context—is particularly visible in the interpretation of the "Albanian urban dwelling." Both Emin Riza and Zija Shkodra consider it in the light of the historical development of the "Albanian town" (*qyteti shqiptar*). On the one hand, they analyze this development in terms of the passage from "feudalism" to "capitalism" that saw the birth of an Albanian national bourgeoisie. In this way, despite the Marxist-Leninist lexicon, urban history is transformed into a purely national history. Multiethnic cities and towns from the Ottoman era are studied not with regard to their urban development, reflecting more general Ottoman trends, but as a part of the Albanians' national awakening. Shkodra's work is dedicated to the "Albanian towns during

164 The concept of "good room" is likewise present in other Balkan contexts, such as Greece (*kalos odas*).

165 Pirro Thomo, "L'Architecture rurale albanaise, ses types et leur diffussion," *CTG. CIMS. Colloque de Thessalonique, 3–10 octobre 1973, CNH de l'ICOMOS*, 11, http://www.icomos.org/publications/thessalonique1973/thessalonique1973-8.pdf (accessed January 20, 2015).

166 For instance, Zija Shkodra emphasizes the Ottoman prohibitions on building fortified houses (likely to serve local, and not necessarily nationally motivated, forms of opposition to the authorities) and deplores the destruction of many such houses during Ottoman campaigns in Albanian territories. In his opinion, the Kosovo *kulla*s became "a symbol of the resistance and of the struggle for freedom, an expression of the national consciousness [and of its attempt] to preserve the age-old Albanian traditions": Shkodra, *La ville albanaise*, 149–150.

the period of the [National] Revival." This refers to the particular Albanian historiographic concept of "National Revival" (*Rilindja Kombëtare*)—a concept that we found in the Macedonian context as well and that we will encounter again in the Bulgarian theory of vernacular architecture.[167] Respectively, the old urban architecture, dating mostly to the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, is seen as the product of the same national awakening and emancipation.

On the other hand, these authors treat the "Albanian town" as essentially European—meaning that it cannot be "Turkish." According to them, before the Ottoman "occupation," the Albanian town had all the "traits of a European town." Indeed, after the Ottoman conquest it acquired the character of "Turkish and Arabian towns," as the Turks introduced constructions that were "foreign" to Albanian architecture, such as mosques, *hamam*s, *tekke*s (convents of dervishes), and *türbe*s (tombs/mausoleums).[168] This insistence on the European character of the Albanian urban heritage is actually related to the second main strategy of interpretation. Namely, the Albanian town and (urban) architecture are not seen merely as phenomena from the period of the Albanian National Revival: they also represent the culmination of a *long historical development*. In a perspective somewhat at odds with that of Shkodra, Emin Riza analyzed almost all the urban and architectural heritage in Albania as pertaining to the "Late Middle Ages" (*Mesjeta e vonë*): these clearly include the nineteenth century as well, at least partially.[169] Thus the house types from that century are treated as the product of an uninterrupted evolution of medieval Albanian dwellings predating the Ottoman conquest.

Here the favorite example of Albanian scholars is the archaeological site of Kamenicë in the region of Sarandë: remnants of local pre-Ottoman stone constructions resemble the later *kulla*s.[170] But this is far from the most ancient archetype. In accordance with the official theory regarding the Albanian ethnogenesis and autochthony, the urban heritage from the late Ottoman period is even placed into a millennia-long continuity since the time of the

167 Zija Shkodra, *Qyteti shqiptar gjatë Rilindjes Kombëtare* (Tirana: Akademia e shkencave, 1984). The term *Rilindja* is translated as "Renaissance" in the French version of the book (cf. Shkodra, *La ville albanaise*). On the Albanian historiographic concept of National Revival, see Alexander Vezenkov and Tchavdar Marinov's contribution to vol. 3 of *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*.

168 See Riza and Thomo, *Albanie*, 40; Shkodra, *La ville albanaise*, 143.

169 See Emin Riza, *Qyteti dhe banesa shqiptare e Mesjetës së vonë* (*Shek. XV–mesi i shek. XIX*) (Tirana: Akademia e shkencave, 1991).

170 Riza and Thomo, *Albanie*, 12–13.

Illyrian towns. Riza regularly refers to these,[171] although he prudently avoids making concrete comparisons. Shkodra is convinced that Albanian master builders from the nineteenth and the early twentieth century were reproducing architectural techniques that had been transmitted from generation to generation for more than twenty centuries.[172]

The third interpretative strategy used by Albanian scholars is the reference to the *master builders* from the late Ottoman period. The Albanian specialists always emphasize the important activity of Albanian builders all over the Balkans and even elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire. Shkodra, Riza, and other authors praise the famous masters from the Dibra region in particular but do not forget to mention those from Opar, Kolonjë, Lunxhëri, and elsewhere. Since these craftsmen had no academic training in architecture, Albanian specialists believe that they used a purely autochthonous know-how. They were *popular* masters—meaning both that they belonged to the people, to the "exploited classes," and that they relied on an age-old experience transmitted from generation to generation.[173] The possibility that Albanian master builders might have adopted models from elsewhere is ruled out from the start.

However, in some cases, Albanian authors feel obliged to admit certain similarities between "Albanian houses" and the traditional architecture of other Balkan nations. Zija Shkodra states that the *çardak* is common in the Balkan peninsula and Asia Minor; he even refers to the "ethnically mixed character" of the traditional architecture in the area, as well as to the "Oriental architecture of the Balkan peninsula." In the interior decoration of Albanian houses, he also finds influences of the "Oriental Arabic, Persian, and Turkish style."[174] Riza and Thomo also acknowledge the similarities to the heritage of neighboring nations. According to them, these similarities result from the geographical proximity and historical relations between these peoples and the long cohabitation in the same political context as well as in similar social and economic conditions.[175] Yet the scholars never stop trying to demonstrate that Albanian house architecture has distinctive traits. Riza stresses that the latter is properly categorized as Albanian, since the common political and other conditions were not able to unify the Balkan house types architectonically. Thus the

171 For instance, Riza, *Qyteti dhe banesa shqiptare*, 277–278.

172 Shkodra, *La ville albanaise*, 187.

173 See Emin Riza's introduction to the album *Gjirokastra. Ville-musée* (Tirana: 8 Nëntori, 1978).

174 Shkodra, *La ville albanaise*, 145, 147, 180, 188.

175 Thomo, "L'Architecture rurale albanaise," 1–2.

Albanian dwelling remained specific. The "inter-Balkan elements" in its typology do not preclude "the authenticity and the originality of the Albanian building culture."[176]

Here Albanian specialists' argumentation goes in two parallel directions. On the one hand, they try to show that the similarity between concrete elements of the Albanian vernacular architecture and other Balkan cases is only superficial and that these elements are actually different. Thus Pirro Thomo states that the *qoshk* is common in Balkan countries and in Asia Minor, but he believes that, in the Albanian houses, it has "a specific treatment."[177] However, the description he proposes shows hardly anything different in the "treatment" of the *qoshk* compared to the *köşk* in other Balkan cases. Contrary to his claims, it is not only in Albania that the volume in projection is integrated into the room space or could be shaped on a lateral wall or at the angle of the building.

On the other hand, the Albanian scholars argue that the same architectural elements are very ancient—which means they cannot be Ottoman. The specialists seem unanimously to assert the pre-Ottoman origins of the *kulla*.[178] But according to Riza, the houses with *hajat* and with *çardak* also have long traditions in Albania: he believes they have ancient Balkan and Mediterranean archetypes. On the basis of archaeological studies, Riza asserts that the house with *hajat* evolved from the ancient *megaron*[179]—a reference that we have already seen in the Serbian and Macedonian context. We will see it later again, as it was largely promoted by Greek specialists, particularly by Georgios Megas, whose work is known and quoted by Riza.

In general, despite their country's communist-era isolation, Albanian authors demonstrate a certain knowledge of the literature published in other Balkan states. And not surprisingly, the consensus with neighbors proves to be difficult. Emin Riza is especially critical of the Serbian architect Branislav Kojić and the Turkish architect Sedad Hakkı Eldem. Kojić is criticized for his insistence that "Balkan profane architecture" is not a national phenomenon. Eldem is criticized, by contrast, for his claim that the same architecture *is* national and, more precisely, Turkish. Riza disdainfully explains that Kojić's thesis is based on the "poor traditions of the Serbs" (*tradita e varfër e serbëve*) in the field of urban architecture.[180] Here he actually uses statements of Kojić and

176 Riza, *Qyteti dhe banesa shqiptare*, 89, 280, 287.

177 Thomo, "L'Architecture rurale albanaise," 3, 6–7.

178 Shkodra, *La ville albanaise*, 151.

179 Riza, *Qyteti dhe banesa shqiptare*, 112, 130, 282.

180 Ibid., 261.

Deroko saying that Serbs were predominantly rural people in the past. Riza's triumphant conclusion is that he who has no traditions in something cannot understand it either. Even sharper is Riza's criticism of Eldem's theory of the "Turkish house," which Riza considers conceptually incoherent and even incompetent. According to him, terms such as *çardak, köşk*, or *divan* do not cast doubt upon the specificity of the Albanian house with regard to the Turkish. He points out that the open porches like that of the *hayat* are by no means characteristic of the Turkish house only, and that they represent an ancient Mediterranean element.

Leaving aside, for the moment, the idea of ancient Mediterranean archetypes of Balkan vernacular architecture, some aspects of Riza's argumentation certainly deserve attention. His and Thomo's insistence that Albanian traditional architecture is not "borrowed" from elsewhere cannot be completely rejected. Riza's critique of the thesis that there might be "creative" and "receptive" peoples—which he sees as an "idealistic" theory—should be accepted unconditionally. However, the Albanian authors fail to conceptualize the complex relationship between "local" traditions and "foreign" influences. As a result, these are completely excluded from their analyses, and the Albanian works conclude with weakly supported claims that Albanian architecture reflects age-old national traditions that exceed the "poor" architectural quality of other Balkan nations.

Thus Shkodra believes that the ancient architectural art and creativity of Albania influenced the Balkans, while he downplays influences in the opposite direction.[181] According to Riza, there was no center in the Ottoman Empire that was able to unify the architectures of the Balkan peoples: the reason is that they had much more ancient architectural traditions than the Turks.[182] Of course, this claim holds true, more concretely, for the Albanians: the Albanian house had developed considerably before the Turkish conquest. Hence, despite its parallels with other vernacular traditions, the Albanian house is strictly related to a concrete ethnicity (*etnos*) and nation (*komb*) and expresses its individuality.

Nevertheless, these declarations are not backed with a clear demonstration of a purely national historical continuity. As Albanian scholars admit, vernacular houses in Albanian-populated territories date back mostly to the nineteenth (as well as to the early twentieth) century: the eighteenth century is the earliest era to which examples can be attributed. Even the medieval-looking *kulla*s are in most cases quite recent, and they appear to have replaced earlier

181 Shkodra, *La ville albanaise*, 140.

182 Riza, *Qyteti dhe banesa shqiptare*, 261.

types of houses.[183] Moreover, in a number of cases, Albanian authors obviously ignore the vernacular heritage in other Balkan contexts and demonstrate a general lack of interest in Ottoman Turkish architecture. For instance, Emin Riza insists that the houses of Tirana, organized around a fireplace room (*shtëpia e zjarrit*), and those of Gjirokastër do not have typological parallels with dwellings of other Balkan peoples.[184] However, a fireplace-centered organization of the house in a "Tirana manner" is certainly present in other regions of the Western Balkans.[185] The impressive houses of Gjirokastër have close parallels in Greek Western Macedonia (Siatista, Kastoria) and Thessaly (Ambelakia).

Finally, Albania itself was never as ethnically homogenous as Albanian scholars prefer to imagine it. Just like other Balkan scholars, in their quest for pure ethno-national specificity, they prefer to disregard details such as the cultural identity, the spoken language, and the national affiliations of the owners of "Albanian houses." For instance, in Gjirokastër, Korçë, and elsewhere, the owners were also Greeks and Vlachs (Aromanians). Indeed, until the end of the Ottoman period, it was difficult to trace an ethnic boundary between "ethnic Greeks" and Orthodox Albanians, as the latter often identified with Greek culture as well.[186] But this fact only shows how problematic the ethnicization of cultural heritage from the same period is.

A similar case is the master builders—which are, as we have seen, a key argument in the Albanian theory of vernacular architecture. Zija Shkodra sometimes seems unable to find words strong enough to describe his feelings and respect for the masterpieces of the "Albanian" builders from the Dibra region. However, these builders were often Orthodox Christian or Muslim Slav Macedonians—especially those from the Mala Reka (mentioned above) and from the Gollobordë/Golo brdo areas.[187] In all likelihood, for most of the

183 Cf. Thomo, "L'Architecture rurale albanaise," 8.

184 Riza, *Qyteti dhe banesa shqiptare*, 263.

185 Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 127.

186 On the (often uncertain) ethnic boundary between Albanians and Greeks in Southern Albania, as well as the Albanization of this region: Nathalie Clayer, "Frontière politique, frontière ethnique et Etat-nation. L'exemple de la région-frontière albano-grecque dans l'entre-deux-guerres," in *Meje v jugovzhodni Evropi: Kultura in politika od XVIII. do XXI. stoletja / Borders in Southeastern Europe: Culture and Politics between the 18th and 21st Century*, ed. Dušan Nećak (Ljubljana: Oddelek za zgodovino Filozofske fakultete, 2004), 159–176; Nathalie Clayer, "L'albanisation de la zone frontière albano-grecque et ses aléas dans l'entre-deux-guerres," *Südost-Forschungen* 68 (2010): 328–348.

187 Shkodra explicitly refers to the craftsmen of the Rekë e Vogël, i.e., of the Mala Reka area in the Republic of Macedonia, without any mention that they were Orthodox Christian Slavs. Interestingly, he quotes the popular saying "If Istanbul disappears, Debar [Dibra]

nineteenth century, these master builders did not have a modern national identity—another point that demonstrates why their categorization, more concretely, as Albanians is problematic. Yet with the elimination of such types of questions as well as of the general Ottoman context, scholars from the communist era promoted a homogeneous Albanian architectural space, covering not only contemporary Albania but a number of other territories: Kosovo/a and Metohija/Rrafshi i Dukagjinit, the western part of the Republic of Macedonia, and part of Montenegro, as well as the "Çamëria." Practically the entire Greek region of Epirus, including the towns of Ioannina, Preveza, and Arta, is included in Zija Shkodra's mapping of the "Albanian town." Thus studies of traditional architecture and urban planning were employed in a certain soft irredentism.

The fall of the communist regime in Albania triggered certain reconsiderations of this isolationist interpretation of Albanian vernacular heritage. In a collective volume resulting from a pan-Balkan conference on traditional architecture and published in Greece, Emin Riza criticizes the communist-era approaches.[188] He admits, at the same time, that the Albanian literature did not adequately address the question of the Albanian heritage's place in the Balkan context. Riza also refers to "Balkan unity" in architecture as a problem that the scholarly studies have yet to seriously address. He attributes this fact to the "lack of information" and to an "erroneous scholarly method." This criticism certainly opens new and promising horizons for the Albanian history of architecture.[189]

It is now time to address three scholarly contexts that have evolved over a longer period of time than the theories in Albania or in the Republic of Macedonia and which have laid strong claims of "ownership" of the Balkan house type. While, as we have seen, such claims are made in Albanian and

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will build it again. If Debar disappears, even Istanbul will not be able to rebuild it." Shkodra quotes it from Dušan Grabrijan's work on the "Macedonian house." Yet he does not even hint that the Dibra masters could be anything other than Albanians: cf. Shkodra, *La ville albanaise*, 177, 180.

188 Emin Riza, "L'Architecture populaire dans les Balkans—problèmes méthodiques concernant son étude," in *Valkaniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, 125–128.

189 Unfortunately, I was not able to take into account the most recent interpretations put forth by Albanian specialists, including by those from Kosovo, who produced their own histories and typologies of the local vernacular heritage. A number of works have been published after the proclamation of Kosovo's independence. See, e.g., Flamur Doli, *Shkolla kosovare e mjeshtrit popullor shqiptar* (Prishtina: Graçanicë, 1993); Flamur Doli, *Arkitektura vernakulare e Kosovës* (Prishtina: ShRTA, 2009).

Macedonian studies as well, the interpretations in these three national scholarships seem more elaborate, theoretically developed, or at least reflected in a relatively larger corpus of research.

When Ancient *Peristyle* Meets the Byzantine *Iliakos*: Theories of the (Northern) Greek Traditional House

Greek vernacular house heritage has perhaps the biggest variety of regional types among all cases in Southeast Europe. Nevertheless, in their effort to demonstrate the ancient Hellenic origin of the traditional houses in their country, Greek architects and ethnographers from the twentieth century tended to reduce this diversity to a couple of archetypes. Paradoxically, the Balkan or Ottoman house type played a central role in this demonstration of historical continuity—even if it is characteristic of only a part of contemporary Greek territory and could hardly be considered the most representative type.

To begin with, the Balkan house type does not exist on most of the Greek islands. For instance, it does not exist in the Cyclades, whose whitewashed cubic houses are today the iconic representation of Greek traditional architecture (at least in tourism). Moreover, the houses and the settlement patterns in the Cyclades or the Dodecanese could even be considered the exact opposite of Balkan architecture. In the absence of wood, most of the Aegean islands have preserved and developed a building technique using stone as a primary material. The roofs are mostly flat (*doma*). In any case, they differ from the four-slope roofing with tiles or slates in the Balkans: in Santorini, one can see vaulted concrete roofs, while in Samothrace, two-slope or one-slope tiled roofs have replaced earlier flat roofing.[190] In general, the island houses do not have protruding stories, and their plans are completely different from those of the Balkan houses. Just as different is their orientation vis-à-vis the street and the court. Finally, the high density of construction in the Aegean settlements creates an overall impression that differs sharply from that of a traditional Balkan town or village.

Also quite different is the heritage of the Ionian (Heptanese) islands, which (except for Lefkada/Santa Maura) were not part of the Ottoman Empire for important periods or, in the case of Kerkyra/Corfu, were never Ottoman. The Venetian legacy, visible in the Aegean archipelago, is much more important

190 See Yannis Kizis, "Samothraki," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 8: *Makedonia B'-Thraki*, ed. Yorgos Lavvas (Athens: Melissa, 1991), 147–170.

here: Renaissance, Mannerist, and Baroque features characterize the heritage of Zakynthos and Corfu. Hence some specialists spoke of the existence of a particular Greek or Heptanesian Baroque.[191] Venetian influence, as well as earlier Frankish influence, is also clear in some parts of mainland Greece—especially in the Peloponnesus (e.g., Monemvasia and Nafplio); other places have still other kinds of Occidental architectural imprint. In Rhodes, one can admire the late Gothic and Renaissance buildings left by the Order of Saint John—the Knights Hospitallers who ruled the island before they were driven away by the Ottomans in the early sixteenth century. An amazing case is the island of Chios, which has four types of vernacular architecture, at least two of which are unique.[192]

These examples already give some idea of the diversity of Greek vernacular house architecture. Within mainland Greece, the picture is no less complicated: from the huts of the Sarakatsani nomads[193] to the impressive stone tower-houses in Mani (the south-central Peloponnesus), Greek traditional dwelling clearly exceeds the typology of the Balkan or Ottoman house. The latter is nevertheless typical for Northern Greece—namely for the regions of Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly (particularly the villages of Mount Pelion next to Volos), and, to a certain extent, for Epirus. In the area of Zagori, in Metsovo (the Aromanian "capital" of the Pindus mountain range), and elsewhere in Epirus, there are mostly stone-built houses, which nevertheless share a number of elements and characteristics with the Balkan house type in terms of their plan, interior decoration, house terminology, and so on. Moreover, contemporary Northern Greece has some of the most fascinating examples of Balkan or Ottoman house architecture, sometimes with elaborate painted decoration on their façades. These are the rich *archondika* ("noblemen's houses," *archondiko* in the singular) of Siatista and Kastoria in Greek Macedonia or of the Thessalian village of Ambelakia.

These houses are, moreover, among the oldest surviving in the Balkans: some of these date back to the eighteenth century. The places in question

191 See Dionysis Zivas, cited in Stefanos Tsiodoulos, *I zographiki ton spition tou Zagoriou. Teli 18ou-arches 20ou aiona. Istoriki kai politismiki proseggisi* (Athens: Rizareio Idryma, 2009), 300.

192 The façades of houses in the "Mastic villages" in the south are decorated with a striking *sgraffito* technique (*xysta*), while the fertile Kambos area has a distinctive stone architecture and particular house plans with mysterious roots—probably Genovese or Byzantine and Genovese. See Charalambos Bouras, "Chios," in *Greek Traditional Architecture*, vol. 1, 143–182.

193 Transhumant Greek-speaking population living in various places in Greece and other Balkan countries such as Bulgaria (where they are known as *Karakachani*).

FIGURE 7.6
The House of the Emmanouil Brothers in Kastoria (1750).

were important proto-industrial and merchant towns by the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. They were the places of origin of Traian Stoianovich's "conquering Balkan orthodox merchant"—a member of the Orthodox "Romaic" community[194] who could have been not only a Greek-speaker but also, in many cases, a Vlach (Aromanian)-speaker. The master builders of the Northern Greek *archondika* themselves came from Epirus (particularly from the *Mastorochoria*, or "masters' villages") and from the western part of Greek Macedonia, where Greek used to be spoken along with Aromanian, Albanian, and Slavic.

Yet it must be noted that the Balkan or Ottoman idiom in architecture also extends further in Greece, particularly on the northern and northeastern Aegean Islands. Thasos has a purely Balkan heritage, while Skopelos (part of the Sporades) is transitional between the Balkan and the Aegean zone. The Balkan house type can also be found in Lesbos, in Chios town, and in Samos facing the Anatolian coast, although Balkan elements coexist there as well with earlier building traditions and with characteristics of the Aegean island architecture.[195] To further complicate the picture, Ottoman features reappear

194 On the "Romaic" community prior to its splitting into modern Balkan nations: see Raymond Detrez, "Pre-National Identities in the Balkans," in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. 1, 13–66.

195 In the cases of Lesbos, Chios town, and Samos, the Ottoman idiom clearly arrived late—in the nineteenth century, when the local urban class achieved a certain degree of economic prosperity. See Eirene Vostani-Koumbas, "Lesvos," and Konstantinos Papaioannou,

in the southern Aegean. These found their way into Crete in the nineteenth century, and the result was a peculiar amalgam with the earlier Venetian legacy. For instance, in Rethymno wooden *şahnişin*s—called *kioskia* in Crete—were installed over Venetian stone constructions, while in Chania there are also examples of Ottoman or Balkan house, but again on Venetian foundations.[196] In Rhodes as well, the stone architecture from the Hospitaller's era was upgraded, during Ottoman rule, with wooden protruding volumes.[197] These were partially destroyed in the interwar period, when the Italian authorities of the Dodecanese restored the Old Town.[198]

This mapping of the Balkan features in Greek traditional architecture shows again to what extent the things that are Balkan are also Ottoman. These features appear clearly with Ottoman rule even in places with solid building traditions influenced by the West. Moreover, we find the same features mostly in parts of the country that remained under Ottoman rule later than the rest

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"Samos," in *Greek Traditional Architecture*, vol. 1, 59–98, 101–140. See also Mara Philippou-Apostolou, "Paradosiaki architektoniki Aigaiou: typologiko ypovathro, diachronikoi metaschimatismoi, topikes idiomorphies," in *Valkaniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, 213–240.

196 See Iordanis Dimakopoulos, *Ta spitia tou Rethemnou. Symvoli sti meleti tis anagennisiakis architektonikis tis Kritis tou 16ou kai tou 17ou aiona* (Athens: Ypourgeion politismou kai epistimon, 1977), 109–110, 149–150; Paraskevi Bozineki-Didoni, "Kriti," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 3: *Dodekanisa-Kriti*, ed. Dimitris Philippidis (Athens: Melissa, 1990), 215–284.

197 In fact, the "Oriental" heritage of Rhodes and Crete clearly differs from the Ottoman idiom typical of the Balkans: the wooden volumes there instead recall the *mashrabiya* of the Arab towns. In the Rhodian town of Lindos, there are clearly "Arabian" influences in the stone decoration of the local "captain houses": see Anastasia Moutsopoulou, "Rodos," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 3, 202. Hence the vernacular heritage of the southern and southeast Aegean is characterized by another typological continuity: vis-à-vis the Arabic-speaking (but also Latin-influenced) Levant. The architecture of Cyprus, whose analysis goes beyond the scope of this study, presents another particular mix of Ottoman "Balkan" and Eastern Mediterranean traditions.

198 During the interwar period, Italian architects designed a number of buildings in the Dodecanese Islands (primarily Rhodes, Kos, and Leros) that were promoted as tourist destinations and slated to be colonized with Italians. Concerning the references to vernacular architecture, Italian designs referred mostly to the heritage of the Order of Saint John (deliberately identified with Venetian domination over the rest of the Greek archipelago); there was also a noticeable Orientalist trend that took its models from Northern Africa rather than the local Ottoman heritage. Intriguingly, sometimes the same architects worked in both the Dodecanese and Albania (e.g., Florestano Di Fausto). On Italian architecture in the Dodecanese, see Vasilis Kolonas, *Italiki architektoniki sta Dodekanisa 1912–1943* (Athens: Olkos, 2002).

of Greece—in fact, in those territories that joined the Greek state only in the twentieth century, during the Balkan Wars and even later. This was the case for Macedonia, Thrace, and parts of Epirus and Thessaly, Crete, and the northern and eastern Aegean islands. Conversely, the relative absence of the Balkan or the Ottoman house type elsewhere in Greek territory suggests that a deliberate destruction of heritage has taken place there. Today, the town of Nafplio (Nauplion) in the Peloponnesus has a particularly "Mediterranean" appearance, with its colorful and solid houses with Neo-Classical traits. But the depictions of Nafplio from the 1830s show a strikingly Ottoman town with wooden architecture, protruding stories, and so on. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Nafplio looked like a Northern Greek town. The same was more or less true of other urban centers such as Chalkida on the island of Euboea, or the Greek capital, Athens, where today there are only isolated examples of houses in the Ottoman idiom. Hence, if nowadays Ottoman and Balkan vernacular heritage is concentrated predominantly in Northern Greece, this is because the Kingdom of Greece established itself in the southern territories earlier and because the de-Ottomanization of their townscapes had started earlier. As the Greek specialist Yannis Kizis asks, "what was called Northern Greek traditional architecture (*voreioelliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*)—is that not, to a certain extent, a conventional lexical creation related to the disappearance of similar buildings in more southern areas of the country?"[199]

In nineteenth-century Greece, the eradicated Ottoman urban legacy was replaced by an almost ready-made architectural idiom, which actually became an official architectural style: this was Neo-Classicism. The reason for this choice is clear: Neo-Classicism was a reference to and a symbolic revival of the Classical Greek architectural heritage. The idea of uninterrupted historical continuity since ancient Greece was—and to a large extent still is—a fundamental principle of articulation of Modern Greek national identity. Yet similarly to the cult of antiquity, Neo-Classicism was not a vernacular Greek phenomenon but an import from the West. Starting in the 1840s, in Athens and in other urban centers of the young kingdom, representative Neo-Classical buildings were designed by German, Danish, and Austrian architects (such as Friedrich von Gärtner, Ernst Ziller, and the brothers Theophil and Christian Hansen). Proposed by European Philhellenes and Bavarian rulers as well as by a Western-educated Greek elite, the identification with antiquity quickly gained popularity in major social strata thanks to the mechanisms of the modern nation-state. In a similar way, the main Neo-Classical constructions in Athens served as models for modest urban or semi-urban house architecture.

199 See Yannis Kizis, "'Episimi' kai 'paradosiaki' architektoniki," 272.

Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian capitals; triangular pediments; typical cantilevers; antefixes in the form of palmettes on the roofs; and other elements of ancient orders appeared in symmetric houses built without professional architects.

The result was that Neo-Classicism became vernacular in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Greece—another instance that shows to what extent vernacular architecture is not a phenomenon frozen in time.[200] Prosperous provincial towns, such as Galaxidi in Phocis (Central Greece), acquired a Neo-Classical appearance. Moreover, from the main urban centers of the Greek state, Neo-Classical idiom moved not only to the islands—where it was amalgamated with the existing building traditions—but also to the territory of the Ottoman Empire. The intermediary was again the Orthodox—Greek-speaking or other—urban class, which gradually identified with the cause of Greek nationalism. Neo-Classical shaping of the wooden angles of traditional Balkan or Ottoman houses, triangular pediments, and other Neo-Classical features appeared in the architecture of Greek districts in the Empire, from Asia Minor to Kruševo (Krousovo) in the present Republic of Macedonia.[201] Neo-Classicism also merged with other academic influences from the West and tended to completely "de-Ottomanize" the Ottoman house. In the Greek neighborhoods of Istanbul, Smyrna (Izmir), Mytilini and Plomari in Lesbos, Chios town, and Salonika or Bitola (Monastiri), wooden timber-framed construction was replaced by stone construction, and the protruding volumes came in the more elegant form of oriel windows supported by *fer forgé* cantilevers.[202]

Hence what we see in the Greek national context is a clear de-Ottomanizing trend. While houses of the Balkan type were demolished in nineteenth-century Greece, in the Ottoman Empire the Greek urban class was a powerful agent of introduction of European models that ultimately dismantled the same house

200 On provincial Neo-Classicist architecture: see Kostas Kouremenos, "Fokida," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 5: *Peloponnisos B'-Sterea Ellada*, ed. Dimitris Philippidis (Athens: Melissa, 1988), 267–298; Manos Biris, "To klasiko stoicheio stin astiki architektoniki tou Elladikou chorou kai i athinaïki paradosi tou 19ou aiona," in *Valkaniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, 351–360.

201 Cf. *Anthologia Ellinikis architektonikis. I katoikia stin Ellada apo to 15o ston 20o aiona*, ed. Iordanis Dimakopoulos (Athens: Ypourgeio politismou kai epistimon, 1981), 33.

202 It must be noted that, although it represented an identity symbol for the Ottoman Greek bourgeoisie, Neo-Classical idiom was also part of the eclectic package of Western influences adopted by the Ottoman palace architecture from the Tanzimat period. Thus it became a general fashion, and it is found in houses of other communities as well: for instance, of the *dönme* (Muslims of Jewish origin) in Salonika. See Agis Anastasiadis, "Thessaloniki. Ano Poli," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 7: *Makedonia A'*, ed. Yorgos Lavvas (Athens: Melissa, 1990), 27–58.

type from within. Furthermore, after the Balkan Wars, the destruction of vernacular heritage shifted to the northern territories of Greece and continued for a long time. In the 1960s and 1970s, Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, an architect and archaeologist from Salonika, deplored the fact that a number of urban centers in Northern Greece had lost their old architecture. He even warned of the imminent extinction of the traditional house in Greek Macedonia and pointed to Bulgaria and Yugoslavia as good examples of preservation of such domestic architecture.[203] Often regarded as "Turkish,"[204] Northern Greek architecture did not enjoy nearly as much public interest or zeal to preserve it as did architecture connected with antiquity or the Byzantine Middle Ages.[205] How did the Balkan house manage to become, in Greece as well, not only a valued heritage but also, in some interpretations, almost the epitome of Greek traditional architecture? And how did all that happen despite the amazing variety of traditional Greek house types?

The answer is complex. To begin with, although the cult of ancient Greek heritage remained fundamental to the articulation of Greek identity, by the end of the nineteenth century, the repertoire of mainstream historical references was no longer limited to Classical Greece. After the 1850s and 1860s, marked by the fundamental contributions of the two fathers of Modern Greek history-writing—Spyridon Zambelios and Constantine Paparrigopoulos—Byzantine heritage was fully rehabilitated as an expression of the medieval "Helleno-Christian" cultural synthesis (*Ellinochristanismos*).[206] Respectively, next to ancient Greek orders, Byzantine architecture became the source of inspiration for modern architectural designs—similarly to what we saw in Serbia. Orthodox churches and public buildings were built in a pastiche of

203 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 14–15; Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki mas klironomia*, 39–64 (an article from 1965).

204 Moutsopoulos said he had often heard people labeling Northern Greek towns as "Turkish"—a characterization that he considered "criminal" (*englimatiko*): Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 15.

205 On the legal and normative framework and the politics of preservation of the vernacular architecture in Northern Greece, see Inès Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord: discours, perception, préservation. L'exemple de la maison 'balkanique'" (PhD thesis, Université Paris VIII, 1999), especially 150–400. I would like to thank Semia Samara for drawing my attention to Inès Gaulis's inspiring dissertation.

206 On the symbolic rehabilitation of the Byzantine past and the development of Byzantine studies in Greece, see Diana Mishkova's contribution to vol. 3 of *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*.

Byzantine constructions.[207] In the 1920s and 1930s, the Neo-Byzantine idiom became more prominent in the townscape of the northern Greek territories that were annexed as a result of the Balkan Wars and World War I. After its destruction in the Great Fire of 1917, the capital of Northern Greece, Salonika, received a new central axis as part of the urban reconstruction project developed under the guidance of the French architect Ernest Hébrard. The project was inspired by the Byzantine monuments of the city, but it also referred to a more inclusive "Mediterranean spirit," from which it took certain "Arabicizing" North African references.[208]

More importantly, Byzantine heritage played the role of a symbolic bridge from ancient Greece to Modern Greek folk traditions—including to vernacular architecture. These traditions became the subject of a particular scholarly discipline: *laographia*, the study of folklore and ethnography. From the outset, it was supposed to demonstrate the historical continuity of Hellenism—that is, of the Greek identity as well as of the Greek "race" (*phyli*)—since the most ancient times.[209] The popular crafts of modern Greeks were seen as a continuation of Byzantine material culture, while the archetypes were inevitably sought in ancient Greece. Folk architecture was included in this search of ancient roots.

One must also take into account a certain dissatisfaction that some Greek intellectuals expressed in the early twentieth century with the Classicist cultural models transferred to Greece from the West. These were considered an artificial Western European creation—a kind of form without substance[210]—in which the young Greek state was trapped since the nineteenth century. In the interwar period, leading Greek intellectuals and writers tried to find another, vernacular and "natural" link to ancient Greece and to articulate the spirit of an eternal metaphysical "Greekness" (*ellinikotita*). The latter was sought in the folklore (performed in the demotic language—hence, a certain rejection of the stylized Classicist *katharevousa*), in popular crafts and traditions, and also

207 Curiously enough, the first example was built quite early: this was the Ophthalmological Clinic in Athens (*Ophthalmiatreion*), completed in 1855 after a design by Lysandros Kaftantzoglou, one of the first Greek architects (trained in France and Italy).

208 See Vassilis Colonas, "La reconstruction de Thessalonique après l'incendie de 1917. 'De l'éclectisme au modernisme, du néo-byzantin aux arabisances, le plan Hébrard trace une nouvelle morphologie pour la ville,'" in *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture*, 150–157.

209 On *laographia* and the father of the discipline, Nikolaos Politis: Michael Herzfeld, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece* (New York: Pella, 1986).

210 On this topic of intellectual debate in Balkan contexts, see Mishkova and Daskalov, "Forms without Substance."

in the distinctive Greek landscape.[211] Architectural Neo-Classicism was treated as one of the imported Western "forms without substance" that was to be reexamined—although, in purified and rationalist forms, Classicism in architecture survived not only in the interwar period but also after World War II.[212]

Given these developments, it is not surprising that the first scholars who demonstrated a particular interest in traditional architecture included not only architects and ethnographers but also archaeologists and Byzantinologists. The first author who should be mentioned here was, incidentally, a native of the new Northern Greek territories: this was the architect Aristotelis Zachos. Born in Kastoria, in what is today Greek Macedonia, Zachos was raised and received his initial education in Veles and Bitola—two towns in what is today the Republic of Macedonia—before he moved to Germany, where he received his architectural training. The fact that he was from the geographical region of Macedonia probably explains, in part, his special interest in the traditional Balkan house.[213]

Zachos resolutely contested the Greek identity of Neo-Classicism. Ironically, the stylistic conventions that were imported to Greece under Bavarian rule were attacked by a specialist educated, among other places, in Munich. Zachos's architectural designs throughout the interwar period attest to his rejection of Neo-Classicism. For instance, in Ioannina (Yannena), the regional capital of Epirus, he designed a series of public and church buildings that combined elements chiefly of Byzantine but also of Northern Greek traditional architecture.[214] The same approach can be seen in the design of a house completed in 1924 in the Athenian district of Plaka. Zachos included rounded protruding volumes, a *köşk*-type veranda, typical door openings, and other elements from the Ottoman period, and he amalgamated these with Byzantine motifs in a way that made vernacular and Byzantine indistinguishable. Curiously enough, the result recalls Branislav Kojić's family house in Belgrade, built at the same time.

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211 On the ideological search for "Greekness" in the interwar period: Dimitris Tziovas, *Oi metamorphoseis tou ethnismou kai to ideologima tis ellinikotitas sto mesopolemo* (Athens: Odysseas, 2006).

212 For a presentation of the development of Modern Greek architecture: Dimitris Philippidis, *Neoelliniki architektoniki* (Athens: Melissa, 1984).

213 On Zachos, see Heleni Fessas-Emanouil, "Reconciling Modernity and Tradition: The Balcanic Relevance of Aristotelis Zachos's (1871–1939) Architectural Approach and Work," in *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture*, 142–149.

214 Neo-Byzantine idiom, as well as some references to vernacular architecture, also characterize the buildings of a series of branches of the National Bank of Greece in Macedonia and Epirus, designed in the same period under the supervision of the architect Nikolaos Zoumboulidis.

Zachos's main preoccupation was the "Greekness" of architectural design. He believed that a new, "pure" Greek art and architecture could be achieved through the study of "folk art" (*laïki techni*) and the application of its inherent wisdom in modern design.[215] At the same time, Zachos expressed his aversion to modern "pseudo-civilization," which had already destroyed the initial harmony of the old architecture in places such as Ioannina. Zachos believed that this architecture had Byzantine roots—a thesis that legitimized the mélange of elements from both Byzantine and Ottoman periods in his own designs. Moreover, he believed that the ultimate archetype of the features of the Northern Greek house type was to be found in antiquity.

This was the case, for instance, for the protruding volumes that in Greece are called *sachnisi* (*sachnisia* in the plural), from the Ottoman Turkish *şahnişin*. Zachos admitted that the Greeks usually considered these "Turkish."[216] However, he referred to ancient texts, particularly urban legislation, allegedly showing that similar protruding elements were often constructed by the ancient Greeks. Zachos backed up this hypothesis with the results of archaeological excavations in Pompeii and the Cycladic island of Delos. They confirmed the existence of balconies and volumes in projection in ancient houses. Zachos also indicated that stone-built residences in Istanbul, known as Fener houses and considered to be of Byzantine origin, also had slightly protruding stories. According to the architect, all this proved the Greekness of the protrusions. For Zachos, the similarity between the ancient and Byzantine dwellings and the traditional houses in Northern Greece was so "obvious" that it did not need any detailed description.[217]

Yet he also provided other data allegedly showing that what was perceived as Oriental in Northern Greek architecture was actually a continuation of ancient Greek and Byzantine models. The *selamlık* corresponded fully to the *andron*—a part of the ancient Greek dwelling reserved for men. The sitting space in the traditional houses of Northern Greece—known as *divani* (from Ottoman Turkish *divan*) or *menderliki* (*minderlik*)—was the *triklinos* (*triclinium*) of the Byzantine home, which also had long seats/beds along the walls. Another particular element that would be frequently evoked in the Greek studies was likewise described by Zachos as Byzantine. These were the stained-glass and non-opening windows with a plaster frame found in the rich *archon-*

215 Aristotelis Zachos, "Archtektonika simeiomata. Ioannina (met'eikonon)," *Ipeirotika chronika* 3 (1928), 306. See also Dimitri Philippides, "B. Historical Retrospect," in *Greek Traditional Architecture*, vol. 1, 38.

216 Zachos, "Archtektonika simeiomata," 305.

217 Ibid., 301.

dika in places such as Siatista, Kastoria, Ambelakia, and Mount Pelion. These are ranged in a row situated above the regular windows that can be opened and that are isolated with shutters. Known as *phengites* in Greek and under different names in Turkish (such as *revzen* or *tepe penceresi*), this feature is in fact typical of Ottoman Islamic and palace architecture. They were used in all large mosques from the Classical and later periods of Ottoman architecture, as well as in grand residential buildings, such as the Topkapı pavilions. Indeed, there were already stained-glass windows in the famous Tiled Kiosk (*Çinili Köşk*) dating from 1472. Yet Zachos completely excluded this larger Ottoman context and preferred to see the *phengites* as a continuation of Byzantine apertures known as *photistikai/photistikes thyrides*.[218]

All these points of interpretation would long endure in Greek theories on the traditional (*paradosiaki*) or folk (*laïki*) architecture of Northern Greece. Zachos was himself a member of a circle of intellectuals who initiated a "return to tradition" as a way to rejuvenate Greek artistic culture. The house in Plaka that he designed actually belonged to the central figure of the circle: the (autodidact) *laographer* Angeliki Chatzimichali. The interior of the house is as representative as its exterior and attests to Chatzimichali's passion for "folk art": it contains wooden carved furniture, vessels, and all kinds of decorative elements of houses from various parts of Greece, particularly from the North (including stained-glass windows of *archondika*). Chatzimichali saw the traditional crafts (embroidery, woodcarving, house-building) as an expression of the "soul of the people" (*psychi tou laou*) and, like Zachos, she attacked "pseudo-Classicism" (*pseftoklassikismos*).[219] "Folk art" was thus supposed to become the basis of a new, genuinely Greek aesthetic and artistic creation. Trying to "revive" Greek traditions, Chatzimichali researched various parts of Greece, chosen seemingly at random. Her first book (1925) was dedicated to the island of Skyros (in the Sporades), and it was followed by studies of the Sarakatsani traditions and on the houses and "folk art" in various, mostly rural, areas of Greece.

Concerning vernacular architecture, the typologies Chatzimichali puts forth actually show how rudimentary the level of knowledge about this heritage was at the same point in time in Greece. She divided traditional house architecture into two kinds, the first called the "Aegean" (*aigaiopelagitikos*) type of house—which she also "found" in mainland Greece and, somehow,

218 Ibid., 304.

219 Angeliki Chatzimichali, *Elliniki laïki techni. Skyros* (Athens: Makris & Sia, 1925), 5, and Angeliki Chatzimichali, *Elliniki laïki techni. I laïki techni: Roumlouki* (*Makedonia*). *Trikeri* (*Thessalia*). *Ikaria* (*Aigaion*) (Athens: Pyrsos, 1931), 7–22.

on the Thracian coast—and a second one, located in Thrace, Macedonia, and Epirus. Chatzimichali also distinguished between a "Southern" and a "Northern" type of house, *maison égéenne ou méditerranéenne* and *maison bourgeoise septentrionale*.[220]

Despite the lack of systematic research on the extremely diverse house types in Greece, Chatzimichali's presentation of traditional architecture rested upon firm premises. According to her, the urban house is merely a development of the rural house—a thesis we have seen previously in other Balkan contexts. Thus the more simple the house is, the closer to archetype it is—and the more ancient Greek features it has.[221] This explains Chatzimichali's special interest in Sarakatsani wattle huts, where she sought remnants of the most ancient Greek traditions.[222] Here a certain contradiction appears, as other Greek specialists later noted. On the one hand, the primitive huts of the Sarakatsani were held to be the starting point of the development of urban dwellings, including the rich *archondika* of Northern Greece. Chatzimichali even believed she had discovered the origin of the *sachnisi* in the Sarakatsani hut.[223] On the other hand, Chatzimichali claimed that the large *archondiko* residences also had elaborate Byzantine and Classical Greek archetypes.[224] Zachos likewise saw the *archondika* of Northern Greece as "post-Byzantine" houses,[225] i.e., as an offspring of Byzantine and ancient Greek models. At the same time, he claimed they originated from peasant houses, which often had very modest dimensions and rudimentary plans.

In any case, Angeliki Chatzimichali was not inclined to compromise her belief in the perfectly national character of Greek traditional architecture. Along with Zachos, Chatzimichali believed that the protruding volumes of Northern Greek houses had ancient Greek and Byzantine roots, that the sitting space (*menderliki*) was the *triklinos* from the Byzantine era, and that the *phengites*

220 Angélique Hagimihali (sic), *L'Art populaire grec* (Athens: Pyrsos, 1937), 8–11; Anghéliki Hadjimihali (sic), *La maison grecque. Collection L'Hellénisme contemporain* (Athens, 1949), 6.

221 Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 77.

222 For instance, the hearth was in the middle of the "room," just like in antiquity: Hagimihali, *L'Art populaire grec*, 8.

223 Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 96.

224 Philippides, "B. Historical Retrospect," 50–51.

225 The historical era to which the traditional architecture of Greece dates back is the "post-Byzantine (*metavyzantini*) period": a period without a proper name, or as Gaulis puts it, "*une période de 'non-dit'* " (Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 402). This is still the official technical term in the Greek normative and institutional framework concerning the monuments of Ottoman and Venetian rule.

were nothing more than the Byzantine *photistikes thyrides*.[226] Chatzimichali admitted some Oriental/Ottoman and Frankish influences on Greek folk architecture but felt they were superficial and concerned only details.[227] Turkish influence in particular was not able to modify any aspect of architecture substantially, because the Greek way of life after the fall of Constantinople was a continuation of "the Byzantine life."[228] Here she referred to a much-exploited cliché that we have already come across in other Balkan contexts—the idea that the Ottoman Turks had nothing to do with architecture and arts and only adopted the traditions of conquered peoples. In the Greek context, this thesis relied on a postulate confirmed by Western scholars: Ottoman architecture was allegedly a mere continuation of Byzantine architecture. Not surprisingly, Chatzimichali emphasized that Turks used Byzantine/Greek master builders for the construction of all kinds of buildings, particularly for the grand Islamic monuments.[229]

Moreover, Angeliki Chatzimichali firmly rejected any possibility of influences coming from the Balkan peoples north of Greece. In a study published after the Greek Civil war (1946–1949) and dedicated to traditional wood-carving, Chatzimichali used extremely nationalistic language. According to her, forms of "folk art" such as the wood-carving decoration—the ones that seemed so "typically Slavic" to authors from Slav-speaking countries and so "Romanian" to Romanian scholars—were "ancestral traditions of the Greek race." Chatzimichali stated that if the "folk arts" of Balkan peoples resembled Greek traditions, it was because these peoples were "civilized" by Byzantine Hellenism and because Greek masters worked in the Balkans as well.[230] In this case, Chatzimichali struggled with an "enemy" whose arguments will be examined below: Bulgarian scholars. Meanwhile, they "discovered" a specifically Bulgarian medieval art and Bulgarian artistic traditions during Ottoman rule, which actually seemed exceedingly close to Greek traditions and thus called into question the national character of the latter. Chatzimichali was contesting in particular the theses of Bogdan Filov, a Bulgarian archaeologist, art historian, and politician, whose writings she knew thanks to no less partisan works of Greek Byzantinologists.[231]

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226 Chatzimichali, *Elliniki laïki techni. I laïki techni*, 139.

227 Chatzimichali, *Elliniki laïki techni. Skyros*, 18.

228 Hagimihali, *L'Art populaire grec*, 7.

229 Hadjimihali, *La maison grecque*, 5.

230 Anghéliki Hadjimihali, *La sculpture sur bois. Collection L'Hellénisme contemporain* (Athens, 1950), 6, 9–10, 20–24.

231 In general, Chatzimichali tried to counter any idea of Slavic imports and presence in Greece. Just as Greek *laography* had traditionally done, she was trying to neutralize the

In fact, Greek Byzantinology made important contributions to the theories of Greek traditional architecture. Especially important were the works of leading archaeologist (and architect) Anastasios Orlandos, as well as those of the historian Faidon Koukoules. Orlandos is famous for his studies of the Byzantine monuments of Mystras in the Peloponnesus[232] and of Arta in Epirus, but he was also interested in the architecture from the Ottoman period—particularly what he called "houses from the Turkish rule" (*ta spitia tis Tourkokratias*).[233] Like Zachos and Chatzimichali, Orlandos was also concerned with modern architecture and thought that the Greek monastic buildings, along with the "folk house," needed to be used as a basis for the creation of a "purely Greek" architectural idiom, free from foreign influences.[234]

Certainly, Orlandos, Koukoules, Chatzimichali, and Zachos did not build on a *tabula rasa* their historical arguments concerning the genesis of the Greek vernacular house. Their theories relied somewhat on foreign research on Byzantine residential architecture—particularly on the much-quoted book by Léon de Beylié.[235] When discussing the "Byzantine house," the latter concentrated on the Fener or Phanariot houses in Istanbul. As already mentioned, Zachos referred to the (slightly) protruding stories characterizing this last type of building that were found not only in Fener but also in other districts of Istanbul. Not surprisingly, Orlandos and Koukoules also accepted that the *sachnisia* of the Northern Greek houses were a survival from the Byzantine era and even from antiquity.

In an article on "the Byzantine house," Faidon Koukoules stated that the Byzantines called the protruding volume *iliakos*—a vernacular term coming from *hēlios*/*ilios* ("sun") that existed in modern Greece as well.[236] Moreover, as Koukoules tried to show, this element of Byzantine residential architecture

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"danger" of the theory of Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, the nineteenth-century Tyrolean scholar who became the eternal *bête noire* of Greek national ideology with his insistence that Modern Greeks were basically descendants of Slavs and Albanians. Cf. Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 99.

232 See Anastasios Orlandos, "Ta palatia kai ta spitia tou Mystra," *Archeion ton Vyzantinon mnimeion tis Ellados* G' (1937): 3–114.

233 Anastasios Orlandos, "Palaia astika spitia tis Artis," *Archeion ton Vyzantinon mnimeion tis Ellados* B' (1936): 181–194; Anastasios Orlandos, "Ta palaia archondika tis Kastorias," *Archeion ton Vyzantinon mnimeion tis Ellados* D' (1938): 196–210.

234 Philippides, "B. Historical Retrospect," 37.

235 De Beylié, *L'Habitation byzantine*.

236 In the Byzantine context, it had also other names: *exostis, tavloton, tavloma, tavlaton, sanidoton, solarion* (from the Latin *solarium*). See Faidon Koukoules, "Peri tin vyzantinin oikian," *Epetiris Etaireias Vyzantinon Spoudon* IB' (1936): 76–138.

was allegedly itself a version of the ancient Greek *dryphaktos*. Apparently, Koukoules imagined the Byzantine *iliakos* mostly as an enclosed volume in projection—that is, as a kind of *sachnisi*. Yet at the same time, Anastasios Orlandos saw the *hayati* (also called *doxatos*)—that is, the open veranda of the traditional Northern Greek house—as a continuation of the *iliakos*. As Inès Gaulis notes, Greek specialists privileged the interpretation of the *iliakos* that suited them most according to the circumstances.[237] Moreover, Orlandos believed that the *doxatos/hayati* was a continuation of the ancient Greek *peristyle* (*peristylion*)—the colonnade of a building surrounding a central garden. His analogy was based on the fact that the *hayati* had also "columns," i.e., wooden pillars supporting the roof, and that it was oriented towards a garden. Similarly, according to Orlandos, the traditional *kioski* (*köşk*) corresponded to the ancient Greek *pastas* (or *pastada*)—another term meaning a sheltered portico/covered gallery with columns.[238]

Orlandos also believed that the functional division of the ground level and the upper level(s) in Northern Greek *archondika* had its roots in the Byzantine houses in Mystras. The *archondika* looked, he said, like fortified houses—another indication of continuity with the architecture of Byzantine fortifications. Orlandos also commented on the interior decorations, particularly the mural paintings in Northern Greek mansions. He interpreted the image of Constantinople/Istanbul, so typical of the rich houses of the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century, as an indication of the Greek owners' patriotic spirit.[239]

In fact, all these points are highly problematic. To begin with, the hypothetical reconstructions of medieval dwellings in Mystras that Orlandos proposes are not characterized by the *sachnisia* imagined by Koukoules. According to the archaeologist, the Byzantine *iliakos* represented an open and recessed balcony rather than a protruding enclosed volume. Even if, in Orlandos's reconstructions, the cantilevered front of the *iliakos* was in a slight projection, the overall effect is quite different from that of a *sachnisi*. Although Greek scholars believed that the *phengites* from the Ottoman period were of Byzantine origin, Orlandos discovered something similar in one house in Mystras. This was the Frangopoulos residence, about which he stated that it "has obviously been transformed during Turkish rule" (*echei profanos metapoiithi epi tis Tourkokratias*)."[240] Although Greek specialists referred to information on

237 Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 89, 93.

238 Orlandos, "Ta palaia archondika tis Kastorias," 201–202.

239 Ibid., 208.

240 Orlandos, "Ta palatia kai ta spitia tou Mystra," 67–68.

photistikes thyrides in Byzantine sources, nothing shows that these elements were placed in a row above the openable windows. Koukoules also relied on anachronistic methodology when he claimed that the study of Greek vernacular architecture could be used retroactively as a "source" of information on the Byzantine house.

The list of specialists whose works and intellectual activity contributed to the reappraisal of Greek traditional architecture would be incomplete without mentioning another member of Chatzimichali's "return to tradition" circle. This was Dimitris Pikionis, the greatest representative of Modernist architecture in Greece. Similarly to Zachos, Pikionis focused on the idea of Greekness (*ellinikotita*) in architectural design, yet his vision was informed by the Modernist interpretations of the vernacular and of its relationship to nature.[241] He himself referred to traditional features in some of his designs. For instance, he used motifs from Northern Greek architecture in the building of the Experimental School (*Peiramatikon scholeion*, 1935) in Salonika, the Macedonian regional capital. However, Pikionis was against the imitation of vernacular heritage. Like the other Modernist architects, his appreciation of the vernacular idiom was based on its supposed "simplicity," and hence "rationality," as well as on its "natural" relationship to the site.

From this point of view, the whitewashed cubic houses of the Aegean archipelago fitted quite well into Modernist aesthetics. Thus Greek architects of the 1930s turned to the Aegean (primarily Cycladic) house type in their search for functionalist principles that could help create modern Greek architecture.[242] It must be noted that Chatzimichali also considered Aegean house architecture (*insulaire, méridional ou égéen*) to be the least evolved form of the constitutive elements of the ancient Greek dwelling and to be a type of house with very old, even prehistoric roots.[243] In a 1943 work, the architect Ioannis Lygizos praised island vernacular architecture as intrinsically modern, with its plastic harmony, simplicity, and autarky. This was an architecture born from the island soil itself and one that had preserved the "classical spirit" with its lyricism and grace, unlike the pseudo-Greek Neo-Classicism in Athens.[244]

Thanks to the works of these architects, ethnographers, and other scholars and intellectuals, vernacular architecture acquired a certain importance

241 On Pikionis, see Philippides, "B. Historical Retrospect," 37–38.

242 This was likewise the case for Pikionis in his design of a school at the foot of the Lycabettus hill in Athens (1932). See Bouras, "The Approach to Vernacular Architecture," 22.

243 See Hagimihali, *L'Art populaire grec*, 8; Hadjimihali, *La maison grecque*, 9; Chatzimichali, *Elliniki laïki techni. Skyros*, 18.

244 See Ioannis Lygizos, *Elliniki nisiotiki architektoniki* (Athens: Aetos, 1943), 109–110.

in the eyes of a broader Greek public. This was certainly a difficult process: Lygizos complained that "educated Greeks" believed that Aegean houses were the same as those in Algiers. Even Chatzimichali, in her work on Skyros, formulated the study of traditional houses as an obligation, something that had to be done even when "they are not nice" (*den einai oraia*).[245] Concerning Northern Greek architecture—also called "Macedonian" (*makedoniki, makedonitiki*) in a regional sense—it was still often regarded as a heritage of the Turkish presence. Yet the political upheavals experienced by Greece in the 1940s tended to focus scholarly interest on precisely this architectural heritage.

The reason for that was certainly the fact that it was associated with the particularly problematic region of Macedonia. Namely, during and after the violent civil war, official state propaganda depicted Greek communists as pro-Slavic traitors who served foreign interests—particularly those of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, and the new, communist Yugoslavia—and as bandits struggling to separate the region of Macedonia from Greece. We see this *ressentiment* towards Slavs/Bulgarians in Chatzimichali's works from 1949–1950 cited above. The same hostility punctuated the writings of the *laographer* Georgios Megas, who was himself born in Bulgaria (Mesimvria/Nesebăr). A member of a minority that was partially expelled and partially "exchanged" with the Greek state, Megas was eager to demonstrate the purely Greek character of a number of folk traditions that had since been "usurped" by Bulgarian scholars.

The Northern Greek house was among these forms of folk heritage. As early as 1939, Megas published an article on houses in Thrace,[246] followed by other studies on the traditional architecture of different parts of Greece as well as by a synthetic work on the "Greek House" from 1949.[247] As it was published two years later in English, it is one of the most-cited works of a Greek author on vernacular architecture and particularly on Balkan house architecture. Yet in fact, Megas added few new points to those already codified by scholars from the interwar period. Megas used the evolutionary model of Zachos and Chatzimichali: in vernacular architecture, there was allegedly a linear development from simple to complex forms. He also portrayed the *sachnisi* as a continuation of the Byzantine *iliakos*, which, in turn, has its roots in the ancient

245 Chatzimichali, *Elliniki laïki techni. Skyros*, 15.

246 Georgios Megas, "Thrakikai oikiseis," *Epetiris Laographikou Archeiou Akadimias Athinon* (1939): 5–49.

247 Georgios Megas, *I elliniki oikia. Istoriki autis exelixis kai scheseis pros tin oikodomian ton laon tis Valkanikis* (Athens: Ypourgeion Anoikodomiseos, 1949); English-language version: *The Greek House: Its Evolution and Its Relation to the Houses of the Other Balkan Peoples* (Athens: Ministry of Reconstruction, 1951).

Greek *dryphaktos*. In his demonstration of historical continuity, a central role was played by the covered verandas open towards the garden. Known as *hayati, doxatos*, and so on, they have already been linked by previous authors to the ancient *peristyle*. Megas also referred to the aforementioned "*pastas* house" and to the *megaron*, the one we saw employed in Yugoslav interpretations as well. The latter is a building with a narrow façade and a columned porch. The *pastas* is also a portico but with a wide façade, and it is typical, for instance, of the ancient Olynthus in Chalcidice. Given that Chalcidice is part of the contemporary region of Macedonia, Megas and other Greek scholars are tempted to imagine a long historical continuity of "Macedonian architecture" from Olynthus to the *archondika* of the Ottoman period.

Megas's work sounded especially partisan given the comparisons he proposed with traditional houses of other Balkan peoples and given his critiques targeting scholars from neighboring countries, particularly from Bulgaria. Using Jovan Cvijić's theories, he indicated that Balkan Slavic peoples had *a priori* different traditional dwellings, distinct from the "Greek house." In Bosnia, for instance, they were wooden log houses. Indeed, Cvijić was especially useful to Megas in demonstrating the claim that Slavic peoples embraced Greek traditions: as already noted, the Serbian anthropogeographer made a distinction between the initial, very simple, "Slavic house" and the Balkan house that he called "Greek-Mediterranean." He insisted that the latter had Byzantine roots. Thus the authority of the Serbian scholar provided useful proofs. Byzantine archetypes were also discovered in the architecture of the Balkans by other specialists, such as Konstantin Jireček, the Czech scholar who was one of the founding fathers of both Serbian and Bulgarian modern historiographies. Megas readily invoked his writings as well.

Less reconcilable was the Bulgarian point of view. Georgios Megas knew the works of the Bulgarian architect Todor Zlatev, whose interpretations will be discussed later. The problem was that, unlike Serbian scholars, the Bulgarians claimed the Balkan house as a national, "Bulgarian house." Megas had to admit that the latter had the same types and evolution as the Greek house. But according to him, it was only because master builders in Bulgaria were Greeks—a point that we have already seen in Chatzimichali's works.[248] Megas emphasized the presence of a Greek population in his native area—namely, Thrace and the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. In his opinion, Bulgarians came to the region as agricultural workers, and the building tradition that they came across was Greek. In fact, according to Megas, every house type in Bulgaria was Greek—

248 Megas, *I elliniki oikia*, 79.

even the troglodyte dwellings in northwestern Bulgaria, which he attributed to the survival of ancient Thracian, that is, more or less Greek[249] models.

At the same time, Megas aptly derided Zlatev's theses about Italian Renaissance influences on Bulgarian vernacular house architecture. Similarly, he criticized the idea of Italian influences in Albanian architecture supported by scholars such as Baron Nopcsa. Megas insisted that the Albanian *kulla* developed from the medieval Byzantine tower. He indicated that the word *koula*(*s*) was present in Byzantine terminology but neglected the fact that it was nevertheless of Arabic origin. In Albania as well, the master builders were Greeks: Epirotes and Macedonians. Greeks, concludes Megas, "taught the building craft to the Albanians, as well as to the other peoples of the Balkan peninsula."[250] Finally, the possibility of Turkish influence on the Greek house was neutralized by the common thesis that the Turks did not have their own architectural tradition. Even their monumental Islamic buildings were, it was alleged, designed by Greeks.

These are the main points of the theory of the (Northern) Greek house as constructed between the 1920s and the 1950s—that is, both before and after World War II and the Greek Civil War. This theory did not lack serious contradictions. For instance, it suggested that the representative examples of vernacular houses evolved both from the simplest peasant and nomad huts and from the elaborate ancient Greek architecture.[251] Given that Greek scholars claimed that Slavs, as "latecomers" in the Balkans, were taught architecture by the Greeks, why should the same hold true of the Albanians, who were presumably as "autochthonous" in the Balkans as the Hellenes?[252] Finally, Greek specialists asserted that Slavs and Turks were migrants: the Turks had a long history of nomadism and, for that reason, were presumably unable to develop their own architecture. But the same scholars were able to refer to the nomadic

249 On the Greek perception of ancient Thracians as protohistoric Hellenes and on Megas's contribution in this respect, see Tchavdar Marinov's article in vol. 3 of *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*.

250 Megas, *I elliniki oikia*, 118.

251 For that reason, Megas was criticized by his fellow *laographer* Stilpon Kyriakidis. In a 1950 article, Kyriakidis insisted that the urban house, particularly the *archondiko*, had nothing to do with peasant houses. It was only a development of the Byzantine house. Its floor levels derived from the fortification purposes typical of the Byzantine period. Yet the *archondiko* was, for Kyriakidis, a step backward from the Byzantine original: it was less valuable, since it was from the Ottoman period. See Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 82.

252 As noted by Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 105.

Sarakatsani as perpetuators of a long architectural tradition going back to ancient Greece.

These paradoxes were addressed starting in the 1960s by a new generation of scholars dealing with Greek vernacular architecture, particularly with that of Northern Greece. Among these one figure is outstanding: Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, an architect teaching at the Polytechnic School in Salonika, a tireless leader of restoration teams and archaeological excavations, and an extremely prolific author. Apart from his contributions to the study of Byzantine and post-Byzantine church architecture, Moutsopoulos has certainly provided the most systematic research on the Northern Greek and Balkan house in Greek scholarly context.[253]

Not surprisingly, his approach is largely shaped by earlier Greek studies. Yet Moutsopoulos worked in an international context different from that in which Chatzimichali or Megas wrote. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Macedonian question was no longer a central public concern, the communist "threat" was efficiently managed, and Greece had generally good relations with neighboring socialist (but not Soviet-dominated) Yugoslavia. Moreover, on the eve of and during the Regime of the Colonels (1967–1974), Greek-Bulgarian relations unexpectedly improved for the first time in modern history, a trend that proved lasting. Thus the international context reduced the traditional anti-Slavic bias in scholarly studies, while relations with Turkey remained problematic, especially concerning the traumatic issue of Cyprus. In any case, Greek scholars were able to debate and even cooperate with their Balkan colleagues at international congresses and conferences, thanks to the new development of Balkan studies.[254] Architects and other specialists dealing with vernacular heritage also had the chance to meet and compare ideas at forums of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and elsewhere.[255] In this way they also learned more about the interpretations put forth by fellow specialists from the Balkans.

253 Among his works, see, for instance, Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, *Kastoria. Ta archondika* (Athens: Ekdoseis architektonikis, 1962); Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, *I laïki architektoniki tis Veroias* (Athens: TEE, 1967); Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*; Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, *Archondospita tis Thessalonikis* (Thessaloniki: Makedoniki etaireia, 1976); Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, *Ta archondika tis Makedonias, 15os–19os aionas* (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis, 1993).

254 On the development and stakes of Balkan studies, see Roumen Daskalov's and Diana Mishkova's contributions to the present volume.

255 See Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 123.

The work of Moutsopoulos mirrors these contradictory influences. There is a good deal of residual nationalism in his studies, as well as a certain opening to the Balkan—and the Ottoman—context and a certain dialogue with scholars from neighboring countries. For instance, Moutsopoulos spoke of the "single spirit [*eniaio pnevma*] of the architectural forms" of different countries under Ottoman rule.[256] This spirit was clearly formed in the Ottoman capital: Moutsopoulos called Istanbul "the common melting pot [*choneftiri*]" and emphasized the "common influences" that the Greek guilds [*isnafia*] of master builders and other craftsmen became familiar with there.[257] He stated that the *archondika* they built were meant to represent "small copies of the famous palaces" of the Ottoman capital.[258] Moutsopoulos also admitted a possible Oriental origin of the symmetrical plan typical of some *archondika* and referred to the Çinili Köşk in Istanbul as the prototype.[259] He likewise emphasized how similar the interior decoration of the Northern Greek vernacular houses was to that of the Ottoman palace architecture: the Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul (mid-nineteenth century) is decorated in the same manner as the *archondika* in Greek Macedonia, Epirus, and Thessaly. Furthermore, the palace of the Emir Bashir (1777), situated 40 kilometers south of Beirut, has decoration similar to the one in Siatista or Veroia in Greek Macedonia.[260]

The value of these observations cannot be underestimated. Yet according to Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, this "single spirit" of the architecture from the Ottoman era was not completely influenced by the "Ottoman way of life," and the Turks were not the essential bearers (*foreis*) of the artistic and architectural forms in question. He stated that "the Turkish people, which is purely belligerent (*kathara polemikos*) [. . .] did not develop its own forms of construction"; the Turks only borrowed such forms from the peoples they subjugated in Persia, Asia Minor, and Syria.[261] What Moutsopoulos called in his works "Macedonian architecture" (*makedoniki architektoniki*) or "Balkan continental post-Byzantine architecture" (*valkaniki ipeirotiki metavyzantini architektoniki*) was rooted in the Byzantine tradition. Moreover, as Inès Gaulis puts it, the idea of continuity with regard to the ancient Greek house is also present in his

256 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 410.

257 Ibid., 409; Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki proexochi "To sachnisi." Symvoli sti meleti tis ellinikis katoikias* (Thessaloniki: Etaireia makedonikon spoudon, 1988), 141.

258 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 418.

259 Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki proexochi "To sachnisi,"* 162.

260 Ibid., 139.

261 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 15. Cf. Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki proexochi "To sachnisi,"* 141.

works *en filigrane*.[262] Thus Moutsopoulos's work is largely a continuation of the genealogical theories put forth by Zachos, Orlandos, Koukoules, and Megas.

Like his predecessors, Moutsopoulos gave special attention to two defining elements of the "Macedonian" or the Balkan house: the *hayati* and the *sachnisi*. He also believed that the *hayati* was a rudiment of the ancient *peristyle* or the *pastas*. He used Megas's typological tables and developed the methodology of the latter based on analogies of ground plans. Moutsopoulos also stressed the presumed genetic relationship of the traditional Macedonian house with the dwellings in the ancient town of Olynthus.[263] Again, like the previous Greek scholars, Moutsopoulos saw the *sachnisi* as a key element of architectural continuity since antiquity, and he even dedicated a special monograph to it.

Indeed, that monograph contains another series of valuable observations. Moutsopoulos emphasized that the term *sachnisi* (*şahnişin* in Turkish) is of Persian origin—from an expression meaning "the seat of the shah"—and that it referred to a particular architectural form that should not be confused with the German *Erker*, the bay windows, or the Arabian *mucharabies*. He stated that the *şahnişin* found in the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul have Iranian and even purely Indian prototypes from the fourteenth century: similar projections are to be found, for instance, in Srinagar.[264] Concerning the Byzantine *iliakos*, Moutsopoulos believed that it was similar to the *hayati*—in other words, to a covered veranda. However, he also accepted Koukoules's idea that the *iliakos* could also have been an enclosed projection, that is, a kind of *sachnisi*. Not surprisingly, he noted that similar elements existed in antiquity, for instance in the architecture of Pompeii.[265] The conclusion is clear: the *sachnisi* is "a very ancient (*panarchaio*) functional and morphological element."[266] It is not Ottoman. The researchers who believed in its Ottoman origin, Moutsopoulos maintained, were misled by the fact that, in its current form, the *sachnisi* is from the Ottoman period.

Moreover, Moutsopoulos enriched the previous theories with another Byzantine reference. According to him, aside from the ancient Greek "*pastas* houses", the archetype of the Macedonian or the Balkan house was in the Byzantine square tower buildings. Why these? Moutsopoulos was facing the fact that the Byzantine houses were poorly documented. There were debates

262 Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 113.

263 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 57–58.

264 Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki proexochi "To sachnisi,"* 77.

265 Moutsopoulos, *Kastoria*, 6.

266 Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki proexochi "To sachnisi,"* 386.

over even the Byzantine character of the architecture of the dwellings in Mystras—the best-preserved Byzantine town that was researched by Orlandos. The houses there were inhabited until the nineteenth century and have gone through many alterations (not to mention the obvious Frankish influences in Mystras). Thus Moutsopoulos suggested instead as a point of comparison the fortification and the monastic architecture from the Byzantine and the "post-Byzantine" era.[267]

Very important from this point of view is the architecture of Mount Athos: the monasteries there represent fortified buildings that have *sachnisia* on their upper levels. A key house type in the picture drawn by Moutsopoulos was also the *pyrgospita* (tower-houses) of Mount Pelion in Thessaly: there one could find inhabited towers from the Ottoman period with *sachnisia* as well as with stained-glass windows (*phengites*).[268] According to Moutsopoulos, with the passing of time, the construction of the upper floor(s) became lighter: this happened in more secure times in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century. In that period, the traditional stone-built towers received volumes in projection on their upper level(s), and that is how the Balkan house was born.[269]

Just like the genealogical tables in the writings of Megas, the model of evolution Moutsopoulos suggests is purely theoretical. His "assemblage" of ancient Greek dwellings with columned porches, oriented towards a courtyard, and Byzantine towers seems quite speculative. The *sachnisi* has a particularly strange historical trajectory in Moutsopoulos's work. It exists already in Greek-Roman antiquity and enjoys popularity in the Byzantine era, to reappear only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, installed over a stone-built Byzantine foundation.

However, instead of addressing these paradoxes, Nikolaos Moutsopoulos turned to another "proof" of historical continuity already exploited by previous Greek scholars. Namely, Moutsopoulos is certainly the most passionate researcher of the activity of the *koudaraioi*—builders from Epirus (especially from the *Mastorochoria*, the "Masters' Villages") and Western Greek Macedonia (the area of Anaselitsa, the mountain villages of the Florina district, etc.). Their guilds—called *isnafia, sinafia* (from the Arabic and Ottoman Turkish term *esnaf*, "guilds"), *bouloukia* (from the Turkish *bölük*, an army detachment), and so on—are a central point in Moutsopoulos's argument. On the one hand, he sought the origins of these guilds in Byzantine craftsmen's corporations. On the

267 See Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 111–114.

268 Moutsopoulos also accepted that the *phengites* were none other than the *photistiskes thyrides* of Byzantine architecture: Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 279.

269 Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki proexochi "To sachnisi,"* 50.

other, Moutsopoulos emphasized the existence of "secret languages" among the traditional builders.[270] In Greece, and in the Balkans in general, master builders often had a specific "professional" jargon of words modified from the respective ethnic tongue or borrowed from other Balkan languages (Albanian, Romani,[271] etc.). Despite the linguistic borrowing, Moutsopoulos believed that these secret languages demonstrated a certain "national" continuity of architectural expertise, as they allegedly perpetuated a secret knowledge that was thus uncontaminated by foreign influences.[272]

Like Chatzimichali, Megas, and so many other Balkan scholars, Moutsopoulos used the activity of master builders to explain the similarity of the vernacular architectural heritage of his country with that of neighboring Balkan countries and to show that these other countries did not have their own traditions. Thus Moutsopoulos underlined the links of Northern Greek, or "Macedonian," architecture to that in Bulgaria, Asia Minor, and elsewhere. However, he insisted that the similarities were due to craftsmen's corporations of "Macedonians" (i.e., Macedonian Greeks) who had worked in the other countries.[273] Here, Yugoslav authors who believed that the Balkan house had Byzantine or even strictly Greek origins are again very useful. Like Megas, Moutsopoulos embraced Cvijić's theory about the Byzantine character of houses such as those in Galičnik, in Yugoslav Macedonia.[274] As already noted, this theory was accepted by the Macedonian scholar Sotir Tomoski, whose work was known to Moutsopoulos. Moreover, Tomoski proved invaluable to Moutsopoulos with his speculation that Skopje's citizens invited Greek masters to rebuild their city after the destruction caused by the Austrian-Turkish war in 1689.[275] At the same time, Moutsopoulos conveniently omitted the activ-

270 For instance, Moutsopoulos, *I laïki architektoniki tis Veroias*, 54–60.

271 Not coincidentally, one of these secret languages is known in Greek as *giouftika* ("Gypsy language").

272 See Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 124.

273 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 32.

274 Ibid., 67. Incidentally, in his works from the 1960s and 1970s, Moutsopoulos referred to places in the Yugoslav republic of Macedonia (such as Galičnik, Veles, and Ohrid) as "northern geographical extensions of Macedonia." This term was obviously acceptable in that period. This perspective clashes with a more recent work by Moutsopoulos where he expresses a strongly nationalist point of view on the Macedonian question and denies that "Skopians" have any right to call themselves "Macedonians": Nikolaos Moutsopoulos, *Vyzantina kai othomanika* (Thessaloniki: Nisides, 2005), 9–36.

275 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 68. However, Moutsopoulos understandably objected to Tomoski's idea that Greek master builders transferred Classical influences to the local architecture: the (Neo-)Classical features clearly appeared later.

ity of Slav builders from Macedonia that Tomoski emphasized. Thus although Moutsopoulos regularly mentioned master builders from Dibra/Debar alongside those from Epirus, Western Greek Macedonia, and Korçë and Devoll in Albania, he treated all of them as Greeks, Albanians (under the Greek term *Arvanites*, i.e., Albanian-speakers, and possibly Albanian-speaking "Greeks"), and Albano-Vlachs (*Arvanitovlachoi*).[276]

The Bulgarian scholars' point of view was, again, less malleable. After Megas, Moutsopoulos quoted works of the Bulgarian scholar Zlatev and did not resist the temptation to present pictures from these, showing troglodyte dwellings. The message was clear: Slavs, particularly Bulgarians, did not have elaborate and permanent houses. Thus it was obviously Byzantine Greeks who taught them architectural skills.[277] Moutsopoulos contested the concept of "Bulgarian [National] Revival architecture" that was codified in Bulgarian studies starting in the 1950s and that will be discussed later here. He stressed that the rich vernacular houses in Bulgaria were relatively late—mostly from the mid-nineteenth century—compared to the Northern Greek *archondika*, attested to date back as early as the 1720s.[278] According to Moutsopoulos, the Bulgarian urban house is similar to the Greek Thracian house (*elliniko thrakiotiko spiti*), but it is far from the perfection of forms and decoration of the masterpieces built by Greek Macedonians and Epirotes: "none of the Bulgarian noblemen's houses has the richness and the grace [. . .] of the *archondika* in Ambelakia, Siatista and Kastoria."[279]

Indeed, in some of his works, Moutsopoulos stated that Greek master builders assimilated and used Ottoman forms.[280] But in his view, Ottoman influence was limited to the interior decoration of houses—particularly "Turkish Baroque" ornaments and frescoes, whose ultimate models were, in any case, to be found in European Baroque. Furthermore, according to the scholar, this Ottoman decoration became intertwined with the Byzantine traditions in woodcarving and decoration.[281] A somewhat original feature in his interpretation is the attempt to appropriate nationally even the possible "Oriental" or "Islamic" influences that marked Greek vernacular architecture through

276 Nikos Moutsopoulos, "Kastoria," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 7, 136. The same appears in Moutsopoulos, *Vyzantina kai othomanika*, 124.

277 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 66.

278 Not to mention some examples allegedly from the seventeenth century: Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki mas klironomia*, 88, 115.

279 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 66–67.

280 Moutsopoulos, "Kastoria," 136.

281 Moutsopoulos, *Makedoniki architektoniki*, 71.

Ottoman mediation. To begin with, for Moutsopoulos, it is the Hellenistic dwelling in Priene, at the Aegean coast of Asia Minor, that was the archetype of the house with atrium typical of the Eastern Mediterranean.[282] Moutsopoulos believed that the Anatolian and Syrian influences on Ottoman architecture were not foreign to the Greeks, because these influences were aesthetic forms characterizing the Byzantinized (*ekvyzantinisthentos*) Anatolian and Syrian world, which had also, conversely, influenced Byzantine art.[283] He emphasized Greek-Syrian relations in history and spoke of the (Christian) Syrians with sympathy as a people with fraternal ties to the Greeks. Thus Moutsopoulos was able to present all possible "Oriental" markers of the Greek *archondika* as intrinsically Hellenistic and Byzantine.

Moutsopoulos's authority in Greek studies of vernacular architecture tended to keep alive the old theories from the interwar period. He is, of course, not the only one who reproduced these, and his approach is actually more nuanced and sophisticated than that of others. The traditional postulates can be found, for instance, in Anastasia Diamandopoulou's studies on the Thessalian Ambelakia: the *sachnisi* as the Byzantine *iliakos*, the *phengites* as another Byzantine element, and the *menderliki* as a continuation of the *triklinos*. But in Diamandopoulou's view, the mural paintings of the interior and the decoration with floral elements are also of ancient Greek origin, and even the low table (*sofra*), one of the rare pieces of furniture in the traditional houses, is "an old Greek furniture from the period of Pericles." The scholar also explained that Greek master builders transferred the *archondiko* architecture to the "Oriental peoples" (*anatolikoi laoi*). However, the combination of the Greek architectural style "with the opulence (*chlidi*) of the art of the Oriental lands produced works without proportion or artistic value."[284] This is obviously the same pattern of Orientalization of the foreign heritage that we saw in the theories of Grabrijan and Neidhardt concerning the "Bosnian house" and the "Macedonian house": while "our" traditional dwellings possess the merits of simplicity, rationality, and harmony, the Turkish and "Oriental" dwellings are exuberantly tasteless. Moutsopoulos also spoke of the Greek vernacular heritage's superiority over that of other Balkan peoples. He said, for instance, that although Kastoria looked similar to "Byzantine Balkan towns," it had "a

282 Ibid., 418.

283 Ibid., 15; Moutsopoulos, *I architektoniki proexochi "To sachnisi,"* 142.

284 Anastasia Diamandopoulou, "Ambelakia," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 6, 125–156.

subtle Greek measure" (*ena anepaisthito elliniko metro*), a typical Greek equilibrium that created a sense of serenity.[285]

Here additional contradictions can be found in Greek scholars' arguments. On the one hand, Moutsopoulos insisted that "Oriental" (Syrian, etc.) influences had a Hellenistic and Byzantine background. On the other hand, he wrote deprecatingly about the simplicity of the Bulgarian vernacular houses, which were far from the lavishly decorated *archondika* of Western Greek Macedonia or Ambelakia. But in the case of Kastoria, he suddenly discovered "measure" and "equilibrium." It is not clear why the presumed simplicity of Bulgarian houses is not an expression of "measure" as well. In any case, while the traditional houses of other Balkan nations are either rejected as tasteless or appropriated as Greek creations, the presence of foreign vernacular heritage in Greece is *a priori* excluded from the general picture. Yet the areas where the Northern Greek house type is common used to be quite mixed linguistically and ethnically. This is especially true of Macedonia, historically the most war-torn part of Northern Greece. Thus in a study on the traditional house of the area of Prespes (Prespa), Yorgos Karadedos and Panos Tsolakis mentioned Slavs only when referring to the material damage caused by medieval Slavic invasions. Nothing in their work indicates that the local houses actually belonged to a Slav-speaking Macedonian population.[286]

Nevertheless, Greek studies of vernacular architecture are hardly limited to the nationalist approach presented so far. Since the 1980s, there has been a certain methodological opening of Greek architectural studies into a broader Balkan—and Ottoman—perspective.[287] As we saw, Ottoman context is present in some respects in the works of Moutsopoulos as well. However, it is oddly intertwined with theories from the 1920s to the 1950s and reinterpreted in quite a nationalist spirit. In some cases, despite the anti-parochial trend, the inertia in scholarly paradigms is difficult to overcome. A striking example is the architect Yorgos Lavvas. He rightly criticized the approach of Zachos, Orlandos, Megas, and Moutsopoulos as based on superficial similarities between dwellings

285 Moutsopoulos, "Kastoria," 151.

286 See Yorgos Karadedos and Panos Tsolakis, "Prespes," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 7, 161–198.

287 This opening to neighboring countries, as well as the reappraisal of the Ottoman context as an integral part of the traditional architecture of the region, is visible in works such as the collective volume *Balkan Traditional Architecture* (see *Valkaniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, proceedings of an international conference held in Salonika in 1997) and the series of volumes published under the same common title by the Melissa Publishing House in Athens (e.g., Riza and Thomo, *Albanie*).

from different and distant eras, and on the problematic assumption of linear development from simple to complex. Lavvas also attacked the ethnic categorization of houses as "Greek" or "Turkish" and indicated that, in some respects, these houses were identical.[288] However, in a rather surprising twist, Lavvas turned to Aristotle and to Hippodamus of Miletus, and to their ideas about the proper organization of dwellings and settlements, in order to find indirect parameters and principles of organization that could link Northern Greek traditional houses to ancient Greek ones. This "soft" version of the historical continuity thesis is based on the idea that traditional architecture had particular physical and meteorological concerns. It was allegedly designed to maintain a harmony between the elements of nature, a certain climatic equilibrium between warm and cold, and so on.

Here the legacy of the Modernist theories about the relationship between vernacular architecture, site, and nature is visible. Thus once again, concepts of Modernism are employed in order to trace a certain tradition and to support claims of national specificity and historical continuity. Lavvas believed that the general principles of construction from the era of Hippodamus and Aristotle survived in the Byzantine period and that they "could not get lost later, even if these centuries were characterized by the violent invasion of the Turkish authority [*exousias*], foreign and without connection to the cultural achievements of the area."[289]

However, some recent studies contain a perfectly up-to-date methodological criticism of traditional approaches to vernacular heritage. Instead of searching for ancient Greek and Byzantine archetypes, leading Greek specialists prefer to restore Northern Greek traditional architecture to its place in the Ottoman cultural context and to research the complex relationship that the vernacular heritage of Greece and the Balkans had with the "high" residential architecture of the Ottoman court and dignitaries. This trend is certainly due to the fact that a higher percentage of Greek scholars are educated in Western universities, and they are better integrated in international networks, than the authors from the former communist countries in the Balkans. Here the names

288 See Yorgos Lavvas, "I architektoniki tis voreioelladikis paradosis," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 7, 10–24. Similar theses appear in his conclusion to *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 8, 315–316.

289 Lavvas, "I architektoniki tis voreioelladikis paradosis," 18. Yet as Gaulis notes, the principles of spatial organization evoked by Lavvas are extremely general: they would have produced phenomena as dissimilar as the Hippodamian plan of the ancient Piraeus and the street networks of Greek traditional settlements. See Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 132.

of three architects from the Athens Polytechnic should be emphasized: Yannis Kizis, Charalambos Bouras, and Dimitris Philippidis (Dimitri Philippides). They have slightly different profiles: Kizis is a specialist in Northern Greek traditional architecture (Pelion, Thrace, Samothrace, etc.); Bouras is an expert in ancient, Byzantine, as well as "post-Byzantine" religious and civil monuments; Philippidis has researched both vernacular heritage and Modern Greek professional architecture. They nevertheless share a critical view.

Thus Philippidis attacks Georgios Megas's theory about the "organic evolution" of vernacular architecture through a linear succession of stages leading from the simplest to the most complex forms.[290] Concerning Northern Greek traditional architecture, Philippidis believes that it is undoubtedly part of a Balkan architectural koiné or common language (*mia valkaniki "koini" glossa*).[291] Similarly, Yannis Kizis refers to the existence of a common/international architectural idiom of the Balkans and Asia Minor. He sharply criticizes the ethnocentric interpretations of Moutsopoulos and the earlier Greek scholars. Along with Philippidis, Kizis states that the ethnographic theory about the *archondika* as upgraded versions of the Sarakatsani hut is naive.[292] According to Kizis, the source of the Northern Greek and the Balkan-(northwest-)Anatolian house type was the official (*episimi*) architecture of the Ottoman elite.

In a number of works, Kizis indicates the mediator of architectural and decorative models from Istanbul to the Balkan and Anatolian provinces. According to him, this was the representative residence (the *konak*, or *konaki* in Greek) of the Ottoman provincial rulers. Kizis asserts that these rulers imitated and, at the same time, transferred to the province the defining elements and the patterns of decoration of the imperial residential architecture existing in the Ottoman capital.[293] He describes the development of the Greek Orthodox urban class in the eighteenth century, which in turn started imitating the opulent mansions of Muslim rulers. The kind of dwelling that resulted was actually part of a certain Ottoman way of life: foreign travelers have provided vivid descriptions of Greek Orthodox "noble men," sitting cross-legged like Muslims, smoking from hookahs, drinking coffee, and constantly playing with their worry beads (*komboloi*). In a number of cases, the Ottoman imperial archetypes are easily recognizable. For instance, the *konaki* of the

290 Dimitri Philippides, "C. The Methodological Problem Today," in *Greek Traditional Architecture*, vol. 1, 50–56.

291 See *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 6, 267.

292 Kizis, "Paradosiaki architektoniki tis Thessalias," 155. See also Kizis, *Pilioreitiki oikodomia. I archetoniki tis katoikias sto Pilio apo ton 17o ston 19o aiona* (Athens: Etva, 1994).

293 Kizis, "'Episimi' kai 'paradosiaki' architektoniki," 269–290.

Voulgaris family on the island of Hydra—a place of non-Ottoman architectural traditions—was visibly inspired by the Aynalıkavak Palace in Istanbul. Even the wooden material was worked by masters from the Ottoman capital, from where it was imported.[294] The tower-houses in Greece—for instance, those on Mount Pelion—are, according to Kizis, not simply avatars of Byzantine towers: their builders have borrowed models from villas (*köşk*) and waterfront houses (*yalı*) in Istanbul.[295]

Charalambos Bouras likewise criticizes the theses of Greek historical continuity and national character in vernacular architecture, as well as similar nationalist interpretations put forth by Balkan scholars (such as the Macedonian Sotir Tomoski and the Turk Sedad Hakkı Eldem). According to Bouras, the Greek *archondika* "were undoubtedly influenced by the two-story Turkish house [*konak*], with its main central room [*sofas*] surrounded by other rooms or open extensions."[296] Apart from the plan, Bouras emphasizes the extent to which the interior and decoration of Greek houses is marked by Ottoman influences: "The ogee arches, the stalactites, the radiate motifs found on ceilings, the door leaves consisting in tiny wooden panels, and the hearths crowned with ogee arches are all old Islamic motifs, while the floral motifs found in such profusion are imitations of inlays from ceramic tiles of Persian origin."[297] Bouras insists that the walled wardrobes and niches (*mesandres*) derive from early Ottoman monuments. In his view, seemingly naturalistic mural paintings, such as those of vases of flowers or baskets of fruit, are also part of a Turkish repertoire: their archetype could be found in the "Fruit Room" of Ahmet III in the Topkapı Palace (1705). The Baroque- or Rococo-inspired decoration found in the Greek "noblemen's houses" is also not an echo of Italian Baroque from the seventeenth century but a later Central European version, which was first imported to Istanbul and from there spread to the provinces.[298]

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294 Ibid., 281; Kizis, *Pilioreitiki oikodomia*, 136–137.

295 Kizis's arguments are reproduced by other scholars, such as Rea Leonidopoulou-Stylianou ("Pilio," in *Elliniki paradosiaki architektoniki*, vol. 6, 11–90) and Sigalos ("Ottoman, Greek or European?" 217–229).

296 Bouras, "The Approach to Vernacular Architecture," 23, 25.

297 Ibid., 31.

298 Bouras, "The Approach to Vernacular Architecture," 33. Yet Bouras indicates that merchants and craftsmen from Northern Greece had access to European decorative models during their journeys in Central Europe, from where they imported furniture, illustrated books, and so on. Epirus had a more direct relation to Italian decoration through the Ionian Islands, which were under Venetian rule. A similar picture is presented by Stefanos Tsiodoulos in his book on the mural paintings of the houses of the Zagori area in Epirus.

In this way, recent Greek authors have utterly destroyed the ethnocentric theories of vernacular architecture developed by their predecessors. As a result, Greek scholarship holds a distinct position among the cases analyzed here. While Greek scholars once engaged in perhaps the most elaborate attempts to dogmatically appropriate the Balkan house type as a purely national architectural phenomenon, now Greek theories are undergoing a radical revision. Certainly, there is still a good deal of traditionalism in Greek studies of vernacular heritage. Yet the fact that leading scholars are able to embrace a critical view such as that of Kizis, Bouras, and Philippidis shows that Greek studies has come a long way since the interwar period. In other Balkan national contexts, the progress is much more modest.

The Invention of "Bulgarian Revival Architecture"

Compared to the sophisticated genealogies of the "(Northern) Greek house," with the numerous parallels, established by Greek scholars, between features of the Balkan vernacular architecture and formal elements of ancient Greco-Roman and Byzantine architecture, Bulgarian interpretations of the Balkan house seem less developed. However, Bulgarian scholars make a particularly forceful claim of "ownership" of the traditional Balkan house type. Nowadays, this claim seems more forceful than the corresponding Greek one, since in Greece the latter was seriously questioned by leading specialists. In Bulgaria, there are few voices opposing the theory of an exclusively Bulgarian ethnonational identity of Balkan house architecture, and these come mostly from marginal figures either within or outside the "expert" milieus.

Moreover, similarly to Turkey (whose case will be examined last), academic and state institutions, the media, and local enthusiasts in Bulgaria managed to make the idea of a "national house" extremely popular among the lay public—probably more than in the Republic of Macedonia, Albania, or

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Popular motifs in the painted decoration of the local dwellings show the influence of the Ottoman Baroque and Rococo. In some cases, one can suppose that the Baroque influences could be the result of a direct contact with Europe, thanks to local merchants visiting Central and Western European countries. Thus Greeks became mediators of European decorative influences in the Ottoman context. Nevertheless, says Tsiodoulos, "without any doubt, the Ottoman decorative elements that exist along with Baroque and Rococo elements in the paintings of the *archondika* suggest the essential role of Constantinople in the establishing and the spreading of a single figurative language." See Tsiodoulos, *I zographiki ton spition tou Zagoriou*, 87–88, 142–144.

(Northern) Greece. Nowadays, perhaps most of the Bulgarians admiring the old houses of Ohrid in the Republic of Macedonia or of Kavala in Greece, or even of Berat in Albania, are convinced that they are looking at "typical Bulgarian" dwellings. The Bulgarian national narrative has traditionally claimed that all of "geographical Macedonia," as well as other neighboring territories, belong historically to Bulgaria. But a visit to a traditional town in Asia Minor, such as Safranbolu or Amasya, or to certain museum houses in Sarajevo or in Mostar would certainly shock the same Bulgarians. These places are far away from the regions claimed by Bulgarian irredentism, yet—notwithstanding some Islamic artifacts—they look archetypically "Bulgarian." But the visitors could easily imagine that Bulgarian master builders had worked in these places as well. How was this nationalist exclusivism made possible in the perception of vernacular architecture?

As in the previous cases, a mere reference to the existing traditional architecture does not help much in finding the answer. Indeed, unlike most Balkan countries, Bulgaria is relatively homogenous in terms of vernacular house types: Bulgarian heritage is visibly Balkan, but it has certain specificities. Not coincidentally, Maurice Cerasi's map excludes northwestern Bulgaria from the core area of the Ottoman house: nineteenth-century peasants lived there in troglodyte dwellings (called *bordey*), similar to the *bordei* in the neighboring Romanian region across the Danube. In mountainous parts of the country, local people—particularly Bulgarian-speaking Muslims (Pomaks) in the Rhodopes—used to build wooden log huts.[299] In the old village of Zheravna and elsewhere in the area of the Balkan Mountains (Stara Planina), houses can be found that in many respects resemble the Ottoman/Balkan type, yet feature a construction that is technologically different. Their walls are built entirely of planks, unlike the timber-and-infill technique of the Balkan house. Moreover, timber-framed houses in certain places in Bulgaria—rural but also (semi-)urban—are often single-story. Cerasi even attributes them to a larger non-Ottoman "Slavic-Hungarian area" with a predilection for ground-floor living.[300] In (north-)western Bulgaria, houses often had specific plastered porches, similar to the Morava-

299 See Todor Zlatev, *Bălgarskata kăshta v svoya arhitektonichen i kulturno-istoricheski razvoy*, vol. 1, *Selska kăshta* (Sofia, 1930), 26, 111–122; Todor Zlatev, *Bălgarska natsionalna arhitektura*, vol. 2, *Bălgarskata kăshta prez epohata na Văzrazhdaneto* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1955), 173–174.

300 Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 128. Otherwise, they have a building technique and pattern of arrangement in urban setting with a low density of construction (typically, they have courtyards/gardens) that are identical to those of the Ottoman/Balkan house type.

Timok type in Serbia. Nevertheless, Bulgarian scholars treat all these varieties only as subtypes of an essentially "Bulgarian" house.

In reality, Bulgaria has carefully preserved many traditional Balkan-type architectural settings—unlike other countries of the region that adopted conservative policies vis-à-vis the same heritage later than Bulgaria. Indeed, in this country one cannot find the rich eighteenth-century *archondika* of Greek Western Macedonia or of Gjirokastër in Albania. There is only one relatively well-restored *archondiko*-type house with stained-glass windows (*phengites*): the Kordopoulos house in Melnik,[301] in the Bulgarian part of "geographical Macedonia" (the Pirin region). As we have already seen, Greek scholars wielded this fact against their Bulgarian colleagues in order to demonstrate that valuable house heritage in Bulgaria was a "late" phenomenon. Nevertheless, eighteenth- and even seventeenth-century houses can be found in some places in Bulgaria. Arbanasi in north-central Bulgaria has some of the oldest examples of the Ottoman house type. In Bansko in the Pirin region, one can see eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century stone houses with a fortified nucleus inside the dwelling and with a timber-framed part oriented towards the courtyard. Their fortified aspect and the painted decoration of their plastered façades bring them closer to the vernacular monuments of Greek Macedonia, Thessaly, and Epirus.

Moreover, starting in the 1830s and 1840s, the city of Plovdiv in Bulgarian Thrace developed an impressive architectural idiom, which greatly influenced the urban architecture of the country. Rich residences with symmetrical plans and strong "Ottoman Baroque/Rococo" features mushroomed in this city and its region, for instance in the present museum town of Koprivshtitsa. Their parallels with the high-style Ottoman architecture of the eighteenth and nineteenth century seem difficult to deny. For instance, some of these mansions, including the famous House of Kuyumdzhioglu (1847, the current Ethnographic Museum of Plovdiv) have conspicuous oval *sofa*s. The same element characterized the palatial architecture of the Ottoman capital: we find it in the *yalı* of Sadullah Paşa in Çengelköy (eighteenth century) and even in the Dolmabahçe Palace. Yet another architectural element became emblematic of the "Plovdiv style": the curved eave or tympanum called *kobilitsa*[302] in Bulgarian that is located symmetrically over the main façade. The origin of this curved eave has been a matter of debate among specialists. Bulgarian scholars have sought its

301 The family name of the owners was perhaps instead Kourdoupalos: cf. Theodoros Vlachos, *Die Geschichte der byzantinischen Stadt Melenikon* (Thessaloniki: Idryma Meleton Chersonisou tou Aimou, 1969), 57–58.

302 The term literally means a yoke or a balance-beam for carrying vessels.

FIGURE 7.7 *Triple* kobilitsa *curve: the House of Kuyumdzhioglu in Plovdiv (1847).*

roots in medieval pre-Ottoman church architecture.[303] Indeed, one can find similar vaulted shaping of exteriors in Byzantine architecture—for instance, of walls supporting the church dome. But an analogous eave located symmetrically over a central entrance characterizes Ottoman buildings from closer time periods: the Osman III *köşk* in the Topkapı Palace (mid-eighteenth century) or the entrance gate of the Ottoman Government building, the famous Sublime Porte (*Bâb-ı Âli*, rebuilt several times and finally reconstructed in 1844).

European academic influences refracted through the eclectic architecture of the Ottoman capital left their mark not only on the residential buildings but also on the Orthodox (as well as Muslim) religious buildings of late Ottoman Bulgaria. Thus the case of *kobilitsa* might be similar to that of the triangular pediments that appeared in the vernacular house architecture in the Ottoman Empire, including in Plovdiv, in the same period: while these are undoubtedly a Neo-Classical element, *kobilitsa* might be a "Baroque" feature mediated again by the Ottoman context. *Kobilitsa* is certainly not a strictly Plovdiv or Bulgarian feature—one can find it in isolated examples as far away as Berat (Albania). Yet it is true that this curved line enjoyed great popularity in the nineteenth-century architecture of Bulgarian towns, including their church architecture.

303 Georgi Kozhuharov and Rashel Angelova, *Plovdivskata simetrichna kăshta* (Sofia: BAN, 1971), 26–27.

Here a specific problem arises again that we saw in other Balkan contexts as well. Bulgarian architectural historians, ethnographers, and writers have long rhapsodized over the beauty and the qualities of traditional Bulgarian houses. However, numerous examples of the country's vernacular house architecture did not belong to Bulgarians. Even entire old towns and villages that are nowadays treated as heritage Bulgarian settlements were not really, or by no means only, Bulgarian. Melnik, to begin with, was a predominantly Greek town (called Meleniko in Greek) and a prosperous merchant center in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The existence of *archondika* with *phengites* there is thus not surprising: these are probably creations of the same Epirote and Western Macedonian master builders who were active in what is today northwestern Greece.[304] As its name indicates, the village of Arbanasi was probably first populated by (Christian) Albanians. Culturally, it was also a "Greek" town in the sense of being a Balkan Orthodox ("Romaic")[305] center whose language of prestige was Greek. As early as the seventeenth century, Arbanasi was a residence of members of the high clergy of the Constantinople and Jerusalem Orthodox Patriarchates and of monks from Mount Athos and Mount Sinai, as well as of Wallachian princes.[306]

The rich residences of nineteenth-century Plovdiv—known to the Greeks (and initially to the Bulgarians) as Philippoupoli (Filipopol, Filibe)—also belonged mostly to the local Greek as well as Armenian bourgeoisie; some mansions had also Jewish owners. Argir Kuyumdzhioglu, the owner of the present building of the Ethnographic Museum, is known to Greek authors as Argyris Kouyoumtzoglou, a Greek from Plovdiv. Indeed, as Bulgarian writers would insist, the Plovdiv Greeks often had Bulgarian peasant roots: this is likely the case for Kouyoumtzoglou as well.[307] However, an essentialist treatment of this urban class as "ethnic Bulgarian" would be far from relevant in this case.[308] The "Greek" part of the "Bulgarian" vernacular heritage could be supplemented with formerly Greek-speaking towns such as Nesebăr (Mesimvria) and Sozopol

304 According to Alkiviadis Prepis, "Rozhenskiyat manastir prez perioda XVI-nachaloto na XX v.," *Palaeobulgarica/Starobălgaristika* 2 (1987): 85–107.

305 See Detrez, "Pre-National Identities in the Balkans."

306 On Arbanasi, see Boyan Gyuzelev, *Albantsi v Iztochnite Balkani* (Sofia: IMIR, 2004), 50–57.

307 See Konstantin Moravenov, *Pametnik za plovdivskoto hristiyansko naselenie v grada i za obshtite zavedeniya po proiznosno predanie* (Plovdiv: Hristo G. Danov, 1984), 51.

308 For a more complex treatment of the "ethnic" categories in nineteenth-century Plovdiv: Raymond Detrez, "Relations between Greeks and Bulgarians in the Pre-Nationalist Era: The Gudilas in Plovdiv," in *Greece and the Balkans: Identities, Perceptions, and Cultural Encounters since the Enlightenment*, ed. Dimitris Tziovas (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 30–43.

(Sozopoli) at the Black Sea coast. In these places are Balkan-type houses with wooden cladding, typical of the Black Sea area in general.

In Samokov, not far from Sofia, the most representative houses belonged to a local Jewish family. And, of course, one must take into account some representative Muslim houses—Turkish, Pomak, even Tatar—which today are also assimilated into a "Bulgarian" heritage understood in narrow ethnonationalist terms. Some of these even play a special role in the narrative of the history of Bulgarian architecture. The tower houses in the town of Vratsa (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), known (like elsewhere in the Balkans) as *kula*s, or the nineteenth-century large fortified estate of a Pomak family in the Rhodopes (*Agushevi konatsi*) are deemed to be late echoes of a "feudal" Bulgarian architecture and examples of a Bulgarian fortification tradition. Their owners are imagined to be medieval Bulgarian noble families, Islamized during the "Turkish yoke."[309]

While Bulgarian specialists imagine an age-old continuity of a purely Bulgarian architectural tradition, the country's vernacular heritage actually mirrors the difficult (some might say belated) development of a Bulgarian urban class and, respectively, of Bulgarian nationalism in the nineteenth century. For a long time, the socioeconomic upward mobility of Bulgarian-speakers entailed their acculturation to the patterns of social prestige and cultural identity of the Orthodox elite par excellence in the Ottoman Empire. This was an urban class able to speak Greek, if not exclusively Greek-speaking, that had a way of life, tastes, and residential preferences not so different from those of the Ottoman Muslim ruling class.[310] Most of the predominantly Bulgarian-speaking villages and towns with a significant merchant class and with thriving proto-industrial production developed after the 1830s, thanks largely to the period of reforms (Tanzimat) in the Empire.[311] On the whole, the protected

309 On *kula*s: Lyuben Tonev, *Kuli i kambanarii v Bălgariya do Osvobozhdenieto* (Sofia: BAN, 1952), 43–56. On the *konak*s in the Rhodopes: Todor Zlatev, *Bălgarskata kăshta v svoya arhitektonichen i kulturno-istoricheski razvoy*, vol. 2: *Gradska kăshta* (Sofia: Edison, 1937), 150–160.

310 Similarly to Greece, there are vivid descriptions of the Ottoman way of life of this class in Bulgarian towns. For a typical portrait of local notables in Koprivshtitsa, with their Oriental garments and habit of sitting cross-legged, smoking from hookahs and drinking coffee from Yemen: Luka Oslekov, "Koprivshtitsa," in *Yubileen sbornik po minaloto na Koprivshtitsa* (Sofia, 1926), 468.

311 Certainly, this does not mean that there were no earlier examples, such as Bansko; these were also made possible by the granting of specific statuses and tax privileges by the Ottoman authorities. For the importance of Ottoman reforms for not only the socioeconomic development but also the national emancipation of Bulgarians, see Alexander

quarters and towns with traditional architecture in Bulgaria illustrate again the a-national character of this architecture: in today's Bulgarian territory as well, it was common to Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians, Turks, Jews, and others.

The idea that this architectural heritage had a strictly national—Bulgarian—identity did not appear immediately after the creation of a Bulgarian state in 1878. Just as in the other Balkan cases, the heritage from the Ottoman era was initially considered to be nothing more than the deplorable legacy of underdevelopment under foreign and particularly oppressive, "Asiatic" rule. In the capital city of Sofia, this heritage was quickly and mercilessly destroyed; the situation was similar in bigger and developed towns, with the fortunate exception of Plovdiv. The same process took more time in smaller provincial places, some of which also lost almost all their traditional architecture (such as Gabrovo and Samokov). As in the other countries of the region, the vernacular houses of the Balkan type were often called "Turkish"—in some cases, also "Greek"—and/or were considered not solid enough and undeserving of interest and protection. Even the name for their building technique—*payantova* (from the Ottoman word *payanda*, a diagonally fixed beam in the timber-framed construction)—became a synonym for "flimsy" or "rickety" in Bulgarian. The first Bulgarian professional architects disdained the "bad" building techniques under Ottoman rule and praised the progress in Bulgarian architecture after 1878—the result of their own efforts.[312] Here are some other examples.

In 1916, Bogdan Filov, the foremost archaeologist and art historian of the first half of the twentieth century (and prime minister during World War II), visited the aforementioned *archondiko* of Kordopoulos in Melnik. Here is how he described it: "The house was built in 1758, but it is not very solid, and it is not interesting as a building."[313] Today the Kordopoulos residence is regarded not only as one of the oldest and most valuable vernacular houses in the country but also as the biggest one. Even later, in an authoritative monograph published in German in 1933, Filov did not revise his opinion. Speaking of the old civil (*bürgerliche*) architecture in the country, he noted the "primitive" character of the Bulgarian house from the Ottoman period and concluded that the Bulgarian master builders from the same period were able to solve only "simple architectonic problems" (*nur einfache Bauprobleme zu lösen*). Moreover,

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Vezenkov and Tchavdar Marinov's chapter "The Concept of National Revival in Balkan Historiographies" in vol. 3 of *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*.

312 See, for instance, J. Chamardjieff (Yanaki Shamardzhiev), *L'Architecture en Bulgarie* (Sofia: Imprimerie de la Cour, Prošek frères, 1904).

313 Cited in *Melnik. Manastir "Sv. Bogoroditsa Spileotisa,"* eds. Violeta Nesheva et al. (Sofia: NAM, 1994), 116.

the Turkish influence, especially in the interior and the decoration, was so strong that, according to Filov, it was particularly difficult to discern a "purely Bulgarian kernel" in this house type (*ist es besonders schwierig, den rein bulgarischen Kern bei ihm auszuscheiden*).[314]

In the 1920s and 1930s, similar assessments were made by a number of intellectuals and specialists. Andrey Protich, one of the leading art historians of the interwar period, considered only the all-wood houses of the Balkan Mountains area to be authentically Bulgarian. The timber-framed residential architecture he treated as Oriental and/or typical of all Balkan peoples.[315] Professional architects also believed that the "Near East abounds in similar buildings."[316] Chavdar Mutafov, an architect, art critic, and writer, believed that in general there was no "great architecture" in the Bulgarian past and noted that local master builders had always followed "foreign models" based in Constantinople/Istanbul (Tsarigrad). He even described the creations of traditional masters as "clumsy," "barbarian," and "savagely primitive."[317] Probably following Cvijić, the geographer Anastas Ishirkov referred to the timber-framed houses, especially those with *hayat* (in Bulgaria often called *chardak* = *çardak*), as "Greek-Oriental," "Southern European," and "Mediterranean."[318] He also believed that the mansions in the town of Koprivshtitsa were a "faithful copy" of *konak*s of Turkish rulers (*bey*s) in Istanbul.[319] Nowadays, such an assessment would shock most Bulgarians: with its colorful and picturesque traditional architecture, Koprivshtitsa is said to incarnate the Bulgarian architectural heritage par excellence.[320] In 1930, the old houses of Gorna Dzhumaya (the present Blagoevgrad), which were then being demolished, were described by a local intellectual as "Turkish architecture—with big *çardak*s and overhanging eaves, and with almost all [houses] being light and flimsy."[321]

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314 Bogdan Filov, *Geschichte der bulgarischen Kunst unter der türkischen Herrschaft und in der neueren Zeit* (Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1933), 12–14.

315 See Andrey Protich, *Denatsionalizirane i văzrazhdane na Bălgarskoto izkustvo prez turskoto robstvo ot 1393 do 1879 g.* (Sofia: MNP, 1929), 455–470.

316 Borislav Stoyanov, "Za rodnoto v arhitekturata ni," *Izvestiya DBA* 14 (1936): 4–5.

317 Chavdar Mutafov, "Rodna arhitektura," *Arhitekt* 1 (1927): 19–23.

318 Anastas Ishirkov, *Harakterni cherti na gradovete v Tsarstvo Bălgariya* (Sofia: Iv. Bozhinov, 1925), 5, 15.

319 Anastas Ishirkov, "Grad Koprivshtitsa," in *Yubileen sbornik*, 261.

320 However, an author from the same town stated that the local architecture followed the style of "the Greek houses that are to be found on the hills of Plovdiv": Oslekov, "Koprivshtitsa," 469.

321 Vasil Sharkov, *Grad Gorna Dzhumaya. Minalo i dnes* (Sofia: AVIF, 1930), 163.

For decades, this was how the Ottoman-era architectural legacy was commonly perceived. Thus it is not surprising that the first Bulgarian professional architects turned to another historical era for inspiration in their attempt to develop a national architectural expression. Between the 1890s and World War I, the city center of the country's capital acquired a certain historicist coloring thanks to a series of buildings (including the Holy Synod, 1909; Central Market Hall, 1911; and Central Mineral Baths, 1913). These were designed by architects such as Petko Momchilov, Yurdan Milanov, Naum Torbov, and Friedrich Grünanger (a Transylvanian Saxon from Schäßburg, today Sighișoara in Romania, invited to work in the country as an architect of the Bulgarian princely court). Educated mostly in German-speaking polytechnic and art schools,[322] they applied in their designs the Neo-Byzantine idiom used for specific buildings in *fin-de-siècle* European architecture, from public baths to temples. In Russia, Neo-Byzantine solutions were also particularly used in Orthodox religious architecture. In 1912, Sofia also acquired its giant Saint Alexander Nevski Cathedral, designed by the Russian architect Aleksandr Pomerantsev.

The reasons for the choice of Neo-Byzantine were similar to those in Serbia, Greece, or Romania. The first Bulgarian specialists identified what they saw as medieval Bulgarian architecture as part of Byzantine architecture. On the one hand, as Orthodox Christians, Bulgarians were supposed to share the same artistic traditions as the other Balkan Orthodox nations. On the other hand, (Neo-)Byzantine architecture was symbolically nationalized: similarly to the "Serbo-Byzantine style," some authors spoke of a "Bulgaro-Byzantine style" as the erstwhile architectural tradition of the country.[323]

However, architectural heritage from the Ottoman period was not entirely abandoned in the new design. Monastic and church architecture from that period, above all the Rila Monastery (dating from the 1780s to the 1830s), was valued as an important national heritage. Thus Orthodox religious monuments were symbolically rehabilitated earlier than Ottoman-era residential architecture: the former were apparently more easily imaginable as a

322 Most of them were trained in Austria-Hungary and Germany, and much fewer in Belgium and France. Naum Torbov, a Vlach from Macedonia, received his architectural training in Bucharest.

323 On (Neo-)Byzantinism in Bulgarian architecture and the "Bulgaro-Byzantine style," see Ada Hajdu's contribution to the present volume. Bulgarian art historians generally classify the works of Grünanger, Momchilov, Milanov, etc., under terms like "National-Romantic Secession": Petăr Yokimov, *Setsesionăt i bălgarskata arhitektura* (Sofia: Arh & Art, 2005), 47–62.

continuation of pre-Ottoman medieval architecture. Examples like the Rila Monastery also have segments from the period before the Ottoman conquest, thus demonstrating a certain historical "continuity." As a result, decorative and architectonic elements of Orthodox Christian architecture from the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century (before 1878) were adopted in a number of cases. The result was similar to the Byzantine-Ottoman amalgams examined above in the cases of Serbia and Greece. An example of such an amalgam is the royal residence in Vrana near Sofia (1912, architect Nikola Lazarov). In the interwar period, motifs from church and monastic buildings of the Ottoman era gained even greater popularity. These included specific arches and openings of door and window frames conspicuously similar to those in Chatzimichali's house designed by Zachos or in Kojić's designs in Serbia.[324]

Yet as these examples might show, the reference to Orthodox religious architecture from the Ottoman period triggered some positive reevaluation of vernacular houses from the same period as well. In Vrana there are long eaves and protruding volumes that recall not only monastic architecture but also traditional house architecture. Here it must be emphasized that Orthodox religious buildings from the Ottoman era are not completely foreign to residential architecture. The monasteries are a good example of this. They typically have a dwelling part (*konak*) with obvious characteristics of the vernacular house and of other civil buildings (e.g. *han*s), such as *çardak*s, projections, and long eaves.

Although more difficulties were involved, the traditional house was clearly on the way to being adopted as national heritage as well. In Vrana again, as early as 1906, a small princely villa designed by the architect Georgi Fingov was built. Although eclectic, it visibly referred to the protruding volumes, enclosed verandas, wooden cladding, and other elements of vernacular houses. One year earlier, the architect Anton Tornyov designed the Bulgarian pavilion at the Exposition Universelle in Liège as a pastiche of civil architecture from the Ottoman period. The building also had typical volumes in projection and *hayat*/*çardak*-type balconies, while its top story imitated the specific watchtower over the Ottoman governmental *konak* in the town of Vidin (northwestern Bulgaria). Yet the pavilion claimed to be a Bulgarian house from the

324 On the architecture in "Bulgarian style," especially in the interwar period: Ljubinka Stoilova and Petar Iokimov, "The Search for Identifiably National Architecture in Bulgaria at the End of the 19th and During the Early 20th Century," in *Genius loci: national et régional en architecture*, 96–105. See also Lyubinka Stoilova, "Tărseniya na natsionalna identichnost mezhdu dvete svetovni voyni v arhitekturata na Sofiya," in *Sofiya i neynite obrazi*, eds. Dobrina Zheleva-Martins et al. (Sofia, 2004), 84–98, http://20c-arch-bg.blogspot.com/p/blog-page_5480.html (accessed January 20, 2015).

Tărnovo district.[325] It must be noted that the town of Tărnovo is strongly associated with Bulgarian medieval "glory" (it was the last of the medieval Bulgarian capitals) as well as with the Revival era (*Văzrazhdane*), the period of development of Bulgarian nationalism in the nineteenth century.

Tornyov quickly became one of the most outspoken specialists in calling for the development of modern architecture in a genuine "Bulgarian style," where the traditional house was supposed to play a central role.[326] His colleague Pencho Koychev also deplored Bulgarian society's "apathy" toward the "old Bulgarian picturesque forms of dwelling" and their common characterization as "*Turkish* or *peasant*."[327] In his design of the royal residence of Tsarska Bistritsa (completed in 1914), Koychev amalgamated a series of such forms—volumes in projection, wooden *çardak*s, specific window frames, etc.—with elements of an Alpine chalet and Western European *Fachwerk*. About ten years later, the old houses surviving in smaller towns (such as Tryavna and Koprivshtitsa), as well as in Plovdiv, appeared in an album of Bulgarian architecture, again published by Koychev.[328] The royal mansion in the village of Banya, Karlovo district (1929, architect Dimităr Tsolov), was designed as yet another pastiche of house architecture from the Ottoman period.

Thus, while at the turn of the twentieth century, Bulgarian architects saw their mission as one of ushering in a modern era of development to erase the shameful traces of the past, twenty years later they started deploring the destructions of the old house and urban heritage.[329] The reasons for this shift are certainly complex. Trained in Central and Western European academies, the first Bulgarian architects became acquainted with the two sources of inspiration serving for the construction of the *fin-de-siècle* "national styles." This was the medieval church architecture but also the vernacular house types. In the interwar period, the emphasis on the idea of national or—to borrow the Bulgarian term from the 1920s—"native" (*rodna*) architecture was stimulated by architectural Modernism. In Bulgaria, it was perhaps accepted less enthusiastically than in Romania, Yugoslavia, Greece, or Turkey, but it was present and provoked heated debates. Some architects—such as Anton Tornyov and Todor Zlatev—expressed rather conservative criticism vis-à-vis the Modernist

325 Irina Genova, *Modernizmi i modernost. (Ne)văzmozhnost za istorizirane* (Sofia: Ida, 2004), 131.

326 See Anton Tornyov, "Invaliden dom v stolitsata," *Spisanie na BIAD* 1–2 (1900): 24–25.

327 Pencho Koychev, "Kăshtata, v koyato e zhivyal Tsar-Osvoboditel prez 1877–78 g. v s. Pordim (Plevensko)," *Spisanie na BIAD* 7–9 (1902): 116.

328 Pencho Koychev, *Bălgarskoto arhitekturno izkustvo* (Sofia, 1925).

329 Aleksandăr Rashenov, "Starinniya bălgarski grad," *Spisanie na BIAD* 3 (1927): 44.

aesthetics, particularly on the question of the apartment buildings that were mushrooming in interwar Sofia. Yet they formulated ideas about the "modern" features of vernacular houses that were quite similar to those elsewhere in the Balkans. Le Corbusier's fascination with the vernacular dwellings in Bulgaria was known to some specialists.[330]

Moreover, the usage of (Neo-)Byzantine architectural solutions is especially problematic in the Bulgarian case. Indeed, these were supposed to refer to the (rather sparse) Bulgarian medieval heritage and to symbolically resurrect its grandeur. But in the Bulgarian context, "Byzantine" was (is) easily assimilated with "Greek," while the Bulgarian national movement started in the nineteenth century as a struggle against the Patriarchate of Constantinople and Greek cultural domination. At the beginning of the twentieth century, nationalist controversies and military conflicts between the Bulgarian and Greek states, especially around Macedonia, only fueled the anti-Greek aspect of Bulgarian nationalism. That is why, in the interwar period, Bulgarian art historians and architects were already working on the invention of a specific "Old Bulgarian/Medieval Bulgarian architecture" (*starobălgarska arhitektura*), supposedly different from Byzantine architecture.[331] However, the results were not necessarily convincing. Anton Tornyov believed that the medieval Bulgarian monuments had "purely Byzantine models" and lacked the typical traces of a Bulgarian influence. Thus the previous attempts to create a "Bulgarian style" in architecture inspired by these monuments were inevitably doomed to failure.[332]

As a result, the last obstacles to the rehabilitation of Ottoman-era vernacular architecture were eliminated. Tornyov discovered the Bulgarian "genius" in the simple master builder (*dyulgerin*) before the "liberation" of the country in 1878—that is, paradoxically, from the period that he defined as Turkish "slavery" (*robstvoto*). He insisted that the buildings from that time, particularly "the Bulgarian house" (*bălgarskata kăshta*), should be taken as the basis of the "Bulgarian style" in contemporary architecture. Tornyov was one of the first to use vernacular features, integrating a number of them in his interwar-era designs—especially the curved eaves of *kobilitsa* type (e.g., in Saint Paraskeva Temple in Sofia, completed in 1930). Volumes in projection, traditional sloped

330 On these debates, see Stoilova and Iokimov, "The Search for Identifiably National Architecture," 99–100; Stoilova, "Tărseniya na natsionalna identichnost," 86–89; Stoilova, "Regionalismus contra Moderne," *Der Architekt. Zeitschrift des BDA* 1 (1998): 34–38.

331 See, for instance, Bogdan Filov, *Starobălgarska tsărkovna arhitektura* (Sofia: P. Glushkov, 1930).

332 Anton Tornyov, *Arhitekturni motivi iz Bălgariya* (Sofia: AVIF, 1925), 7. See Anton Tornyov, "Nashata kăshta," *Spisanie na BIAD* 22–23 (1924): 357–358.

roofing, long eaves, and other vernacular elements appeared in the design of many private houses as well of big collective households from the 1920s and 1930s. The traditional interior was not forgotten either: some apartments, such as that of the architect Hrabăr Popov (1937), had also "Bulgarian rooms" in "national style,"[333] like the aforementioned "Bosnian rooms" or to "Turkish rooms" in the case of Turkey.

However, the promoters of the pre-1878 architectural heritage had to answer a logical question: why was this heritage to be regarded as more Bulgarian than, say, the medieval/Byzantine architecture? Tornyov was aware of Bulgarian vernacular houses' similarity to Turkish, Greek, Armenian, and Jewish houses. He also indicated the presence of "Islamic" influences on the traditional Bulgarian dwellings. Yet Tornyov discovered a magical solution that Bulgarian scholars after him would also employ: the houses of these nations were similar simply because they were built by Bulgarian master builders. Respectively, their architectural type was Bulgarian—a claim whose counterparts we have seen in the Macedonian, Albanian, and Greek context.

In parallel, Bulgarian authors sought (Western) European, particularly Italian Renaissance, influences in the "Turkish-era" architecture from the nineteenth century.[334] This idea undoubtedly seems odd. Bulgarian scholars obviously tried to "synchronize" the Bulgarian cultural evolution with the (Western) European one. Like all "Europeans," Bulgarians were supposed to have their own Renaissance: perhaps it came later than the one in the West, but it needed to have happened. Indeed, in the nineteenth century, there was an important development in crafts related to the Orthodox religion (such as icon painting, woodcarving, and architecture), and these arts experienced Western academic influences. Bulgarian historians also proposed plenty of analogies between the period of the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century in Ottoman Bulgaria and the Western transition to modern times ("spiritual renewal," "rationalism," "humanism," etc.). As a result, this period was treated as something clearly different from the "medieval" era before it.[335]

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333 Stoilova and Iokimov, "The Search for Identifiably National Architecture," 98.

334 At the beginning of the twentieth century, the architect Georgi Kozarov referred to "Renaissance forms" in Bulgarian traditional building culture and to the town of Tryavna as the "Bulgarian Florence": "Nashite predshestvenitsi—maystor Kolyu Ficheto," *Spisanie na BIAD* 1–2 (1900): 15–23, and Georgi Kozarov, "Trevnenskite rezbari i zografi," *Spisanie na BIAD* 7 (1901): 131–138.

335 More on the historiographic treatment of the period: Roumen Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans: Historiography of the Bulgarian Revival* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004); Vezenkov and Marinov, "The Concept of National Revival in Balkan Historiographies."

Moreover, the strange comparison was suggested by the particular concept under which the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century (before 1878) came to be commonly labeled in the Bulgarian narrative. This was the aforementioned *Văzrazhdane* or National Revival, the term meaning literally "re-birth" or "re-*naissance*." In general, this concept was used to refer to the Bulgarian national movement from that period—the one for church independence from the Constantinople Patriarchate as well as the development of modern Bulgarian culture. At later stages, it was used for the anti-Ottoman revolutionary movement as well. As a result of this terminological "coincidence," Bulgarian specialists identified the period of Bulgarian national "awakening" with a Western European concept of a completely different kind. The greatest authority in Bulgarian art history, Bogdan Filov, claimed to find "Renaissance" phenomena in the church and civil architecture, in the applied arts and painting before 1878. He concluded that Renaissance and *Văzrazhdane* were "in essence two similar eras."[336] Furthermore, the old vernacular houses, almost all of which date back to the *Văzrazhdane*, happened to be associated in Bulgarian scholarship with both the National Revival and the Renaissance—similarly to the churches, the decorative woodcarving, and the icon painting prior to 1878.

This idea also found its place in the first systematic inventory of vernacular residential architecture in Bulgaria. This work was published in the 1930s in two volumes by the aforementioned architect Todor Zlatev. The first volume was dedicated to the "rural house" and the second to the "urban house."[337] Thus as in most of the Balkan cases (with the notable exception of Romania), national tradition was discovered by Bulgarian scholars not only in the presumably timeless autochthony and intimacy of the villages but also in the towns, which were, as we have seen, quite multiethnic. Zlatev nevertheless put forth a theory that gave urban architecture the impression of having the "right" national character: he treated it as having evolved unilaterally from peasant architecture. As the Bulgarian population consisted predominantly of peasants, this meant that the roots of urban house culture were also Bulgarian. This theory, which we saw in other national contexts as well, ultimately enabled the "nationalization" of the vernacular heritage from the Ottoman period.

Zlatev was still far from appropriating all of it as purely Bulgarian. For instance, he identified "Oriental" and even "strong Arabian" influences in defining elements of the Bulgarian urban houses (including volumes in projection, long eaves, distinctive chimneys, walled wardrobes, carved wooden

336 Bogdan Filov, *Văzrazhdaneto na bălgarskoto izkustvo* (Sofia, 1931), 27.

337 Zlatev, *Bălgarskata kăshta*, vol. 1 and vol. 2.

ceilings, and gardens).[338] He also mentioned the similarity between the houses of Koprivshtitsa and rich residences in Istanbul and Asia Minor. However, Zlatev downplayed such parallels when he discussed the wooden houses of Zheravna, although these have plenty of Ottoman features as well. In accordance with modern architectural theories that privileged the rural wooden house as the archetypical vernacular dwelling, Zlatev believed that these represented the "genuine, not influenced by anything" Bulgarian house and a continuation of pre-Ottoman medieval buildings.[339] Zlatev was also the first to refer to part of the Bulgarian vernacular house heritage as "houses of the Bulgarian [National] Revival" (*kăshta na bălgarskoto văzrazhdane*).[340] He uses this term for timber-framed houses in smaller, "typical Bulgarian" towns such as Tryavna, while he defines the colorful mansions in Koprivshtitsa and Plovdiv as "Constantinopolitan" (*tsarigradska kăshta*).

Today, this classification would sound unusual to Bulgarians: Koprivshtitsa and Plovdiv are now strongly associated with the *Văzrazhdane* as a result of the amazing expansion of this concept in the Bulgarian historical narrative. But even more striking was Zlatev's thesis that the "Constantinopolitan house" was somehow an avatar of "the house of the Italian Renaissance." As we have seen, the Greek scholar Megas ridiculed him for this claim. Following Protich, Zlatev thought that Italian Renaissance influences reached Bulgaria through Wallachia and Macedonia (and reached Macedonia through Dalmatia)—but chiefly through the Ottoman capital. In reality, he indicated only a few very general elements supposed to connect Bulgarian vernacular buildings to Renaissance architecture—such as the symmetrical plan of Plovdiv houses. As a whole, Zlatev's theory from the 1930s seems to be a compromise between the lingering idea about the Ottoman context of Bulgarian traditional architecture and the desire to synchronize this architecture with its Western European counterparts.

Yet Bulgarian architectural theories were getting more and more nationalistic. In the late 1930s, like other Balkan countries, Bulgaria adopted the monumental Classicist idiom of the "Fascist" Italian and German architecture of the period. At the same time, the historical narrative became relentlessly dogmatic and centered exclusively on the interests of Bulgarian statehood. This intellectual evolution is visible in the work *Bulgarian National Architecture* published by the architect Konstantin Dzhangozov in 1943, during World War II, in which the country sided with Nazi Germany. The writing reproduced ideas

338 Ibid., vol. 2, 34.

339 Ibid., vol. 1, 39.

340 Ibid., vol. 2, 16–21.

about modern architecture that had been debated in the interwar period. However, it was marked by references to Nazi ideology and by a certain anti-modern trend: Dzhangozov attacked the "blind" imitation of the West and the desire to enter "modern times" at any cost. Dzhangozov recommended as the basis for the elaboration of modern architecture in "Bulgarian style" the "house of the 'Revival,' as some people call it."[341] He emotionally described the old traditional houses with their timber-framed construction (*payanti*), their *çardak*s, roofs with tiles that were still called "Turkish tiles" (*turski keremidi*), and so on. Dzhangozov also saw the "houses of the [National] Revival" both as "Renaissance dwellings" and as a continuation of medieval Bulgarian house architecture.

Thus, on the eve of the communist regime taking power in 1944, the Bulgarian theory of vernacular architecture contained serious contradictions. The houses from the Ottoman era were seen both as a continuation of medieval architecture and as Renaissance buildings. They were sometimes typically Bulgarian, sometimes Constantinopolitan, Oriental, and Turkish, or built in an Italian manner. Their Ottoman or "Turkish" aspect was nevertheless doomed to disappear—ironically, during a regime that from the outset claimed to be internationalist.

In fact, communist rule not only did not suppress the quest of "national style" in architecture but even encouraged it. By the early 1950s, Bulgarian architects had to comply with the hazy Stalinist formula of art "socialist in content, national in form." In any case, they were obliged to study the experience of their Soviet colleagues. Soviet architects had already introduced various architectonic elements and decorations deemed traditional for the various Soviet peoples among the Neo-Classicist, Empire, and other academic features of the architecture from the Stalinist period. Thus roughly the same references to vernacular Bulgarian elements that existed in the architecture of the "bourgeois" period reappeared in the design of the new, "national in form" public and residential buildings of the 1950s. The most important architectural creation—the ensemble around Sofia's "Largo"—included Neo-Byzantine features, interpreted again as references to the medieval Bulgarian architecture, as well as vernacular elements from the Ottoman era. Interpreted as references to the National Revival period, such elements, especially the *kobilitsa*, enjoyed great popularity in 1950s design.[342]

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341 Konstantin Dzhangozov, *Bălgarska natsionalna arhitektura* (Sofia: ABV, 1943), 27.

342 More in Konstantin Boyadzhiev, "Bălgarskata arhitektura prez 50-te godini. Kulturen i politicheski kontekst," in *Prostranstvoto arhitektura*, vol. 1 (Sofia: Akademichno izdatelstvo,

Apart from the architectural design, a certain ideological continuity regarding the period before 1944 is also visible in studies dedicated to traditional architecture. Todor Zlatev repeated most of his ideas in his new writings, such as in the volumes of his work *Bulgarian National Architecture*.[343] At the same time, there was a temporary trend among historians of architecture to portray a specific "Bulgarian Baroque" from the Ottoman period. The leading proponent of the existence of such a style, the architect Milko Bichev, published a work in 1955 dedicated to the question.[344] Bichev rightly criticized the analogies between residential architecture from nineteenth-century Bulgaria and that of Renaissance Italy. However, his own attempt to find a Bulgarian Baroque style in the nineteenth century could seem no less paradoxical. It must be taken into account that Bichev's work appeared in the period when Bulgarian architects abundantly used the "Baroque" *kobilitsa* tympanum in their designs. In fact, Bichev "Bulgarianized" the concept of Ottoman Baroque, but the result seems jarring, as the author linked Bulgarian vernacular architecture from the nineteenth century directly to its presumed "archetypes" in Central Europe. For instance, Bichev compared a house in Koprivshtitsa (*Lyutova kăshta*) with the Belvedere Palace in Vienna in order to demonstrate their "common" elements. These commonalities seem to be found mainly on the level of "emotional impact."

Nevertheless, the ideological context of the closed communist state soon imposed a revision of the existing ideas about foreign influences. The quest of Western European styles in Bulgarian vernacular architecture was suppressed, even if it never disappeared completely from the literature. Following a 1953 conference of Bulgarian architects dedicated to national architecture, the officially imposed term describing the vernacular heritage was "Bulgarian [National] Revival architecture" (*bălgarska văzrozhdenska arhitektura*). Furthermore, the vernacular houses were thereafter referred to as varieties of the "Bulgarian

2000), 61–81; Elena Ivanova, "'Imperski' sintez na universalno i lokalno. Arhitekturata na stalinizma (30-te–50-te godini)," in *Prostranstvoto arhitektura*, vol. 2 (Sofia: Akademichno izdatelstvo, 2008), 127–147.

343 Todor Zlatev, *Bălgarska natsionalna arhitektura*, vol. 1: *Bălgarskiyat grad prez epohata na Văzrazhdaneto* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1955); vol. 2: *Bălgarskata kăshta prez epohata na Văzrazhdaneto* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1955); vol. 3: *Prostranstvoto v bălgarskata văzrozhdenska arhitektura* (Sofia: Tehnika, 1958) and vol. 4: *Bălgarskite gradove po reka Dunav prez epohata na Văzrazhdaneto* (Sofia: Tehnika, 1962).

344 Milko Bichev, *Bălgarski barok. Prinos kăm problemite na bălgarskoto izkustvo prez epohata na Văzrazhdaneto* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1955).

Revival house" (*bălgarska văzrozhdenska kăshta*).[345] The terms were apparently put forth by the ideologist of "socialist realism" Aleksandăr Obretenov. His aim was to emphasize the autochthonous character of the architectural heritage from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and to stop it from being labeled as "Renaissance," "Constantinopolitan," "Baroque," etc.[346]

In this way, communist-era scholars only crowned the efforts of the previous "bourgeois" period to develop a theory of national architecture, and they took the final steps in the exclusivist attribution of the vernacular heritage to the Bulgarian National Revival. They modified the existing trend in one visible way. Insofar as, in the new ideological context, the reference to church and monastic architecture was no longer desired, it was the vernacular *house* that was put at the very core of the idea of traditional Bulgarian architecture.[347] As a result, the specific "church" openings of door and window frames from the interwar design disappeared from the new projects in the "national" spirit in favor of characteristics of the vernacular house.

After the Stalinist period, there was a tacit reconciliation with Modernism in Bulgarian architecture, similarly to what happened in the USSR and the other socialist countries. This process emphasized even more some of these vernacular characteristics, especially the protruding horizontal volumes that we find in a number of public buildings—for instance, in the new building of the Bulgarian Radio in Sofia (1972, architect Georgi Stoilov), in the governmental Boyana Residence/Dom 1 (1974, Aleksandăr Barov), and in a series of Communist Party offices in the province.[348] The development of mass tourism in Bulgaria since the 1960s also contributed to the "revival" of the house architecture from the National Revival period, sometimes in the form of pastiche. The imitation of the same heritage in the design of tourist and residential buildings alike peaked after the fall of the regime in 1989, thus marking a new continuity between different periods of recent Bulgarian history.

Most notably, the parallels between Bulgarian architectural heritage and features of the Ottoman architecture disappeared for good. At the 1953 conference

345 The English translation of these concepts may be misleading. The term "Revival" here refers not to a *Neo-* style such as the Gothic Revival or the Tudor Revival but to vernacular architecture, which is directly linked to the period of the Bulgarian "National Revival" or "Awakening."

346 Aleksandăr Obretenov, "Văprosi na arhitekturata v svetlinata na trudovete na Y.V. Stalin po ezikoznanieto," *Izvestiya na IGA* 3–4 (1952): 121–122.

347 As noted by Elena Ivanova, "Istoricheskata interpretatsiya na arhitekturnoto ni nasledstvo," in *Prostranstvoto arhitektura*, vol. 1, 45–60.

348 See Georgi Arbaliev, *Natsionalni traditsii v arhitekturata* (Sofia: Tehnika, 1982), 270–305.

mentioned above, Bulgarian architects denied not only any Ottoman influence on Bulgarian traditional architecture but even the existence of Ottoman architecture as such. The Turks allegedly followed only Byzantine and Bulgarian traditions.[349] Todor Zlatev, the codifier of the theory of Bulgarian vernacular architecture, was soon criticized by his colleague Lyuben Tonev for identifying "Turkish" influences in this architecture as well as in the traditional Bulgarian townscape.[350] While Zlatev expressed mixed feelings about the "national" character of monuments such as the bridges, fountains, and clock towers from the Ottoman era, Tonev resolutely included these in the list of National Revival monuments.

The theory of Bulgarian Revival architecture was ultimately codified in literature from the 1960s such as the academic *Short History of Bulgarian Architecture*[351] and the works of the new authorities in the field—authors such as Rashel Angelova (Rachelle Anguelova) and Georgi Kozhuharov. These *a priori* excluded the analysis of any broader international context from the research on the traditional Bulgarian house and other architecture. As Kozhuharov stated, the problem of foreign influences and borrowings in the Bulgarian Revival house type "remains unstudied." He nevertheless stressed that this type was original and was not transferred to the country from Asia Minor, Greece, Austria, or elsewhere.[352] Indeed, it would be an oversimplification to treat the Bulgarian vernacular heritage as an imported phenomenon. But the new researchers simply refused to examine the interaction between local traditions and the official architecture from the Ottoman period in its larger geographical framework. Thus probable foreign, especially Ottoman, influences remained conveniently "unstudied."

There was nevertheless a slight epistemological problem with the very concept of Revival (*văzrozhdenska*) architecture/house chosen by Bulgarian scholars. Attributing traditional Bulgarian architecture exclusively to the period of National Revival (roughly the end of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century prior to 1878) could raise some questions concerning its historical continuity and origins before the Ottoman era. The title of one

349 See *Problemi na Bălgarskoto arhitekturno nasledstvo*, ed. Emil Momirov (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1955), 230.

350 See Lyuben Tonev, "Za nyakoi neizyasneni văprosi ot nasheto gradoustroystveno nasledstvo," in Lyuben Tonev, *Po pătya na bălgarskoto gradoustroystvo* (Sofia: BAN, 1987), 332–344 (first published in 1957).

351 *Kratka istoriya na bălgarskata arhitektura*, vols. 3–4 (Sofia: BAN, 1961) (2nd ed. [1 vol.], 1965).

352 Georgi Kozhuharov, *Bălgarski kăshti ot epohata na Văzrazhdaneto* (Sofia: BAN, 1953), 15.

of Georgi Kozhuharov's major monographs is telling: *The Bulgarian House through Five Centuries*.[353] "Five centuries" must refer to those after the late-fourteenth-century Ottoman conquest of the country. Bulgarian academic literature insists broadly on a historical continuity between the dwellings of the Second Bulgarian Empire (the end of the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century) and those from the Ottoman era. Nevertheless, unlike their Greek colleagues, Bulgarian scholars never provided a detailed theory about the origins of one or another typical feature of the vernacular house type since the Middle Ages (if not since ancient times). Thus their claim that there was a long historical and purely Bulgarian evolution of the same house type is not supported by solid arguments. Georgi Kozhuharov only declared that, even if the term *çardak* was Ottoman, this element existed even before the Turkish invasion.[354] Kozhuharov admitted that there was "very little data" about the appearance of Bulgarian towns in the pre-Ottoman era. He nevertheless suggested that these definitely had "quite a picturesque aspect" and insisted that the medieval Bulgarian building technology was very developed, like in "the other cultured states."[355]

Not surprisingly, the same scholars saw Ottoman domination only in terms of destruction. Or they saw it in terms of adoption of purely Bulgarian traditions: the architect Rashel Angelova insisted that it was the Turkish houses that looked like the Bulgarian ones, not vice versa.[356] The *Short History of Bulgarian Architecture* explicitly declared that Bulgarian architecture "exercised influence on the monumental and, especially, on the residential architecture of the Turks."[357] Kozhuharov believed that once they arrived in the Balkans, the Turks moved into Bulgarian houses, as these were abandoned by their owners due to the Ottoman invasion. As a result, Ottoman Turks adopted the medieval Bulgarian type of houses, while these houses underwent a process of "Turkification" (*poturchvane*) that lasted five centuries. Yet this process was unable to change essentially the architecture or even the urban network in the "Bulgarian territories."[358]

These assertions certainly sound naive. Ottoman rule substantially altered the urban network and the townscape of the "Bulgarian territories": some of the

353 Georgi Kozhuharov, *Bălgarskata kăshta prez pet stoletiya* (Sofia: BAN, STIGA, 1967).

354 Ibid., 78.

355 Ibid., 14–15.

356 Rashel Angelova, "Văzrozhdenski kăshti v Yugozapadnite Rodopi," *Izvestiya na STIGA* 19 (1966): 152–153.

357 *Kratka istoriya* (1965), 195.

358 Kozhuharov, *Bălgarskata kăshta*, 19–20.

"typical Bulgarian towns" with "Revival architecture," such as Tryavna in central north Bulgaria, were created only in the Ottoman period and even at the initiative of the Ottoman authorities, and they developed thanks to tax privileges that these authorities granted.[359] There are few reasons to postulate a Bulgarian influence on Ottoman monumental architecture: in general, Bulgarian scholars refer not to the grand Ottoman monuments from the Classical period but to later and smaller provincial buildings in Bulgaria, such as the Bayraklı Mosque in Samokov (mid-nineteenth century), probably built and decorated by local Bulgarian masters. Bulgarian scholars obviously tend to appropriate the old cliché of European art history about Ottoman architecture being a simple offspring of Byzantine architecture and to substitute "Bulgarian" for "Byzantine."[360]

At the same time, in order to demonstrate the claim that vernacular house architecture from the Ottoman period was a continuation of medieval Bulgarian architecture, Bulgarian scholars simply rewrote the history of specific settlements. For instance, Arbanasi, the village with the oldest houses in Bulgaria, was depicted as being in direct historical continuity with the Second Bulgarian Empire, whose capital—Tărnovo—is situated a few kilometers away. While the first Bulgarian works on the history and architecture of Arbanasi referred to Albanian founders of the village,[361] these references disappeared from the scholarly studies under socialism. The Wallachian rulers who had residences there were also quickly transformed into unknown Bulgarian aristocrats.[362] The houses of Bansko—like Arbanasi, a village whose existence is not attested prior to the Ottoman period—were likewise treated as survivals of "the disappeared architecture of the feudal class from

359 See Machiel Kiel, "Urban Development in Bulgaria in the Turkish Period: The Place of Turkish Architecture in the Process," in *The Turks of Bulgaria: The History, Culture and Political Fate of a Minority*, ed. Kemal Karpat (Istanbul: Isis, 1990), 79–158; Machiel Kiel, "Zur Gründung und Frühgeschichte der Stadt Trjavna in Bulgarien. Unbenutzte osmanische administrative Quellen aus den Archiven von Istanbul, Ankara und Sofia über Gründung und Entwicklung Trjavnas 1565–1702. Ein Beitrag zur Entmythologisierung der Geschichte Bulgariens," *Münchner Zeitschrift für Balkankunde* 7–8 (1991): 191–218.

360 On Bulgarian architecture prior to and during Ottoman rule, see Machiel Kiel, *Art and Society of Bulgaria in the Turkish Period* (Assen and Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1985).

361 See Yordan Georgiev, *Selo Arbanasi. Istoriko-arheologicheski belezhki* (Sofia, 1903); Andrey Protich, "Arbanashkata kăshta," *Spisanie na BIAD* 2 (1925): 27–34, and *Spisanie na BIAD* 3 (1925): 37–41. See also Zlatev, *Bălgarskata kăshta prez epohata na Văzrazhdaneto*, 117–126.

362 For instance, Arbaliev, *Natsionalni traditsii v arhitekturata*, 162–166. In the same vein, in 1975, Arbanasi was given a residence of Todor Zhivkov, the communist party and state leader—obviously as a continuation of the local "aristocratic tradition."

the region."[363] One of the specialists, Margarita Harbova, claimed that parts of Bansko's houses dated back to the pre-Ottoman period (from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century).[364] Her colleague Lila Zaharieva even believed that the houses of Arbanasi and Bansko were *entirely* preserved examples of the architecture of the Second Bulgarian Empire.[365] Needless to say, these authors never made comparisons with the building techniques and stylistic features in other Balkan contexts that might have shed light on the "unusual" or "ancient" features of local dwellings. For instance, the houses of Arbanasi clearly display influences from the architecture of the Ottoman capital in both their decoration and their specific plans.[366]

The total absence of comparisons with the vernacular heritage of other Balkan countries and with official Ottoman residential architecture—in general, the exclusion of any "non-Bulgarian" context—likewise marked the studies of the complex case of Plovdiv. Earlier Bulgarian works indicated the significant presence of Greek and Armenian families who owned the impressive mansions of the Old Town. Even in 1960, the architect Hristo Peev, the pioneer of the study of vernacular Plovdiv houses, was able to refer to the influence of the *Ottoman* Baroque and Rococo on their specific architecture.[367] However, during the same decade, all Ottoman, Baroque, "Renaissance," and other such aspects of the latter were decisively rejected, and Bulgarian architects dedicated themselves to demonstrating the Bulgarian folk basis of the Plovdiv urban house type. Here the methodological starting point was Todor Zlatev's thesis from the 1930s, according to which urban architecture was only a complex development of rural architecture. Georgi Kozhuharov and Rashel Angelova applied this thesis to the case of Plovdiv in a joint book from 1971.[368] According to the scholars,

363 Kozhuharov, *Bălgarskata kăshta*, 47.

364 The parts Harbova refers to are the "fortified kernels"—the storage rooms that could hide people in case of attack: Margarita Harbova, *Gradoustroystvo i arhitektura po bălgarskite zemi prez XV–XVIII vek* (Sofia: BAN, 1991), 122–124. See also her statements at an academic discussion on the architecture of Bansko: "Arhitekturata na banskata kăshta," *Muzei i pamentnitsi na kulturata* 1 (1986): 19–21.

365 Lila Zaharieva, "Srednovekovni bolyarski zhilishta ot Vtorata bălgarska dărzhava," in *Izsledvaniya vărhu arhitekturata na bălgarskoto srednovekovie*, eds. Stefan Boyadzhiev et al. (Sofia: BAN, 1982), 204–255.

366 Tuleshkov, *Arhitekturnoto izkustvo*, vol. 2, 96: "As a whole, the decoration of the early Arbanasi houses has many more parallels with Istanbul and Edirne than with Moesia [northern Bulgaria]"; see also ibid., 92.

367 Hristo Peev, *Plovdivskata kăshta prez epohata na Văzrazhdaneto* (Sofia: Tehnika, 1960), 62–76.

368 Kozhuharov and Angelova, *Plovdivskata simetrichna kăshta*.

the symmetrical Plovdiv house type from the nineteenth century represented an evolved version of the rural house from the Rhodopes region lying to the south of the city. Apart from the typological analogies between houses in these two places, they referred to the fact that Bulgarian master builders from the Rhodopes used to build residences in Plovdiv.

While in the 1930s, certain specialists criticized Zlatev's evolutionary model and indicated that, conversely, it was the rural house that represented a "primitive" version of the urban,[369] Kozhuharov and Angelova *a priori* excluded this possibility. Since they imagined the Rhodope villages to be foci of Bulgarian folk traditions uninfluenced by foreign architectural contexts, the Plovdiv dwellings were successfully "Bulgarianized." The Armenian and especially the Greek presence were also carefully purged not only from the academic literature but also from the image of Old Plovdiv that was actively promoted within and outside the country. Nowadays, one of the most famous examples of Plovdiv residential architecture is known to the broader public as "Lamartine's House"—after the nineteenth-century French writer who spent a couple of days there on his journey across "the Orient." Although Peev's monograph identified the same building using the name of its owner (the House of Mavridi[s]), the works that followed saw fit instead to label it with a Western European writer's name. Yet no one seemed interested in the original impressions of Alphonse de Lamartine, who mentioned that he stayed in the house "of the young Greek, Mr. Mavridis" (*la maison du jeune Grec, M. Mauridès*),[370] and who did not refer at all to the presence of Bulgarians in Plovdiv.

A similar case is that of Melnik. Not only was its Greek past not mentioned since the 1960s, but Bulgarian scholars went to great lengths to invent a whole historical narrative about a "Bulgarian" Melnik that was supposed to be a stronghold of the Bulgarian identity since the Middle Ages.[371] Furthermore, its vernacular houses were interpreted either as versions of the "Rhodopes house type," or of a regional "Pirin type," or even of a particular "Melnik type." Bulgarian specialists never mentioned the similarities between the Kordopoulos mansion and the *archondika* in Siatista, Kastoria, Ambelakia, and so on, let alone its

369 Aleksandăr Rashenov, "Dipl. Ing. Teodor Zlatev, arhitekt—Bălgarskata kăshta v svoya arhitektonichen i kulturno-istoricheski razvoy. Kniga 1. Selska kăshta," *Arhitekt* 5 (1930): 9–22.

370 Alphonse de Lamartine, *Voyage en Orient*, vol. 2 (Paris: Hachette et Cie, Furne, Jouvet et Cie, 1887), 250–251.

371 On the case of Melnik, see Tchavdar Marinov, "De la 'ville grecque' au musée bulgare: l'invention d'un patrimoine national à Melnik," *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 1–4 (2009): 239–271.

parallels in Ottoman palatial architecture.[372] In this case, it clearly constitutes a monument without close counterparts within Bulgaria.

In general, instead of analyzing inconvenient "details," Bulgarian scholars devoted themselves to creating complex periodizations of vernacular architecture ("Early Revival," "High Revival," "Late Revival," etc.) and meticulous regional typologies. In some cases, the result was paradoxical. For instance, the Kordopoulos mansion has been described as an example of "High Revival" (*zryalovăzrozhdenska*),[373] even if it is one of the earliest preserved houses. The problem here is perhaps that Bulgarians had residences of similar dimensions later, while Bulgarian specialists were trying to squeeze the country's entire vernacular heritage into the categories of "Revival" architecture. At the same time, the regional typologies were clearly instrumentalized not only to assert the "purely Bulgarian" character of this heritage but also for the purposes of Bulgarian irredentism. As the different house types of Bulgaria have parallels in the neighboring countries, the very naming of a certain type served to appropriate the heritage of these countries as well. For instance, the "Rhodopes house type," also called the "southern zone" of Bulgarian Revival architecture, was identified by Bulgarian specialists not only in Plovdiv and Melnik but also in Salonika and even in Ohrid, in the westernmost part of the Republic of Macedonia.[374] Thus the traditional house architecture of the entire geographic region of Macedonia was supposed to belong to the "southern zone" of an essentially Bulgarian house.

Moreover, apart from house and Orthodox religious architecture, the concept of "Bulgarian Revival architecture" was expanded to cover all kinds of buildings typical of the Ottoman period: bridges, public fountains (*cheshma*s, from the Turkish *çeşme*), public baths, even storehouses (*mağaza*). Ironically, Bulgarians initially regarded all these types of buildings as "Turkish": after 1878, they were neglected and demolished in many places.[375] Also striking is

372 In the early 1960s, the architect Georgi Repninski was still able to indicate the similarities between the Kordopoulos house and a number of residential buildings not only in the Balkans but also in Asia Minor. He thus emphasized the Ottoman context of the "Bulgarian Revival architecture": Georgi Repninski, "Melnishkata kăshta," *Arhitektura* 6 (1963): 21–22. Yet nowadays, even the name of the owner is Bulgarianized as "Kordopulov" on a welcome plaque next to the house entrance.

373 Stefan Stamov, *Bălgarskata zhilishtna arhitektura* (*XV–XIX v.*) (Sofia: BAN, 1989), 89.

374 Kozhuharov, *Bălgarskata kăshta*, 129–149.

375 See Mihaila Staynova, *Osmanski izkustva na Balkanite XV–XVIII vek* (Sofia: Universitetsko izdatelstvo, 1995), 43–49. On the destiny of a number of valuable Ottoman monuments in Bulgaria: Bernard Lory, *Le Sort de l'héritage ottoman en Bulgarie. L'exemple des villes bulgares, 1878–1900* (Istanbul: Isis, 1985).

the fact that these monuments of architecture and urbanism were being built in Bulgaria and elsewhere in the Balkans well before the Bulgarian National Revival. For instance, the superb bridge in Mustafapaşa (today Svilengrad) dates from 1529, while the Kadin bridge, located not far from the town of Kyustendil, is from 1470.[376]

Bulgarian architects have been even fonder of the aforementioned clock towers (*saat kuleleri* in Turkish). Early clock towers in the Balkans appeared in predominantly Muslim urban settings. This is also the case for the first one, the *Saat kula* in Skopje, which was built next to the Hünkâr Mosque in the 1560s and 1570s, when the Muslims were about 77 percent of the local population.[377] In Bulgaria as well, clock towers are sometimes located in (formerly) Muslim neighborhoods and next to the main mosques. In any case, they were often built at the initiative of local Ottoman rulers: Lyuben Tonev, a devoted researcher of these towers, mentioned Turkish initiative in most cases.[378] Indeed, in the nineteenth century, Bulgarian artisan guilds (referred to with the Ottoman term *esnaf*) initiated the construction of such public clocks, thus adopting a certain already-existing concept of townscape. In Bansko, a clock was installed in 1866 on the church bell tower, perhaps modeled after some monasteries on Mount Athos.

Yet such cases do not mean that clock towers were necessarily adopted as a purely Bulgarian type of building and assimilated to church towers during the National Revival period. For instance, it seems that in the town of Byala, Bulgarians tried to erect a church bell tower but were finally forced by the local Ottoman *bey* to transform it into a public clock.[379] According to some sources, in Peshtera, the clock tower was even built as compensation to the local Muslims, so they would not protest the construction of a church.[380] Not surprisingly, after 1878, these monuments were demolished in many Bulgarian towns, including in the capital, Sofia: they were regarded as Turkish—even, to

376 Even the house gardens, which Zlatev in the 1930s considered an adaptation of Turkish gardens, were reinterpreted by socialist-era scholars as expressions of Bulgarians' love for nature and of the sense of natural harmony allegedly typical of the Bulgarian woman. See Rashel Angelova, *Progresivni tendentsii văv văzrozhdenskata zhilishtna arhitektura* (Sofia: BAN, 1979), 48–85.

377 Mehmet İnbaşı, "The City of Skopje and Its Demographic Structure in the 19th Century," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies* 8 (2003): 285.

378 See Tonev, *Kuli i kambanarii*.

379 Hristo Hristov, *Byala. Kratka istoriya* (Byala: Vesta pres, 2006), 37.

380 Tonev, *Kuli i kambanarii*, 178.

a degree, as late as after World War II.[381] Nevertheless, references to old clock towers clearly entered the repertoire of the architecture in "Bulgarian style" during the interwar period. Starting in the 1950s, thanks to specialists such as Tonev, clock towers found their place among the most important "Bulgarian Revival" monuments. They were quickly associated by specialists both with the church bell towers from the nineteenth century and with Italian Renaissance campaniles. Moreover, they were even interpreted as symbols of Bulgarian national consciousness and of anti-Turkish resistance.[382]

As a result, the Bulgarian interpretation of vernacular architecture tended to appropriate all Ottoman-era heritage as strictly national. From this point of view, it seems to be the most ambitious of the corresponding Balkan theories. In Greece, for instance, Ottoman clock towers were generally not perceived as an important national heritage.[383] Paradoxically, some Bulgarian authors even included mosques on the list of Bulgarian National Revival monuments.[384] It must be noted nevertheless that a similar trend to incorporate all characteristic monuments of the Ottoman era in the national narrative exists in Albanian and Macedonian interpretations. Yet the Bulgarian theory of "National Revival architecture" seems to be the most comprehensive and codified doctrine.

As already stated, Bulgarian nationalist maximalism in the field of vernacular architecture relied much less than its Greek counterpart did on genealogi-

381 See Petăr Karasimeonov, "Kulata v Bansko i kulite-chasovnitsi v nashite zemi," *Arhitektura* 6–7 (1947): 19–22. While these were being destroyed in Bulgaria, by the end of the nineteenth century, public clocks mushroomed in the urban centers of Asia Minor and of the Arabian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, as they were part of an urban planning program under Abdul Hamid II. On clock towers in the Ottoman Empire: Hakkı Acun, *Osmanlı imparatorluğu saat kuleleri* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2011); Hakkı Acun, *Anadolu saat kuleleri* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 1994). See also Andreas Lyberatos's contribution to the present volume.

382 Apart from the cited works of Karasimeonov and Tonev, see also Georgi Arbaliev, *Stroitelni i hudozhestveni traditsii na bălgarskata arhitektura* (Sofia: Tehnika, 1977), 70–71, 410–412; Anna Antonova Roshkovska, *Bălgarskite maystori i pametnitsite na islyama u nas* (Sofia: Ab, 2003), 100–101.

383 This is in contrast with the bridges from the Ottoman period, especially those in the region of Epirus. Among the reasons why these monuments came to be so cherished in the Greek context is perhaps the popular folk ballad about the Bridge of Arta. This is the Greek version of a legend that exists all over the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Caucasus. The plot concerns a master builder who walls his wife into a building (in this case, a bridge in the town of Arta in Epirus) so that it will stop crumbling.

384 See Antonova Roshkovska, *Bălgarskite maystori*, 6, 10, 24.

cal theories about the origin of one or another element of this architecture.[385] Bulgarian arguments instead predominantly employed the thesis that "native" master builders were of crucial importance to the development of Ottoman architecture. We came across the same thesis in the Greek, Albanian, and Macedonian context: Bulgarian studies have certainly influenced the latter, while being embroiled in a debate with the Greek interpretations. In Bulgaria, the glorification of master builders started in the interwar years but developed mostly during the socialist period, when they were extolled as brilliant representatives of the Bulgarian people (*narod*) in both the class-ideological sense (the "simple" folk) and the ethnic sense. The most venerated was the nineteenth-century master Nikola Fichev (Kolyu Ficheto), architect of a number of fascinating church and secular buildings, to which he abundantly applied "Baroque" features such as the *kobilitsa* line. Once included in the National Revival interpretation, master builders were exalted as national "awakeners," and personalities like Fichev were even retroactively provided with a "revolutionary" biography, though there were no sources to support this.[386]

By contrast, Bulgarian scholarship chose to ignore any data contradicting the dogma of the Bulgarian Revival architecture. The rigid and strictly controlled academic field and the closed nature of the state during the communist regime ensured that the mainstream theory would be not only reproduced within the academic literature but also be popularized throughout society. Indeed, Bulgarian specialists were not entirely isolated from their colleagues in other Balkan countries: they had the chance to meet them at international conferences dealing with vernacular heritage and its protection—an opportunity that only increased after 1989. Yet these meetings did not seriously shake

385 Nevertheless, there were such examples. For instance, in the 1980s, an archaeologist suggested the hypothetical reconstruction of a mansion whose foundations were discovered in the medieval Bulgarian capital Tărnovo: Yanka Nikolova, "Zhilishteto v Tărnovo prez XII–XIV v.," in *Tsarstvuvashtiyat grad Tărnov. Arheologicheski prouchvaniya* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1985), 64–74. The dwelling allegedly had the appearance of a symmetrical *konak* from the Ottoman period with a covered gallery of *hayat*/*çardak* type and a timber-framed story in projection. Some architects accepted this reconstruction as a proof of the medieval Bulgarian roots of the National Revival architecture. There was nevertheless no consensus between the specialists even about that concrete building. Some of them admitted that it probably had a stone-built story without projection: Teofil Teofilov, "Grazhdanska sgrada na Tsarevets," *Muzei i pametnitsi na kulturata* 2 (1979): 34–41.

386 More on this question in Tchavdar Marinov, "Chiya e tazi kăshta? Izmislyaneto na bălgarskata văzrozhdenska arhitektura," in *V tărsene na bălgarskoto: mrezhi na natsionalna intimnost* (*XIX–XXI vek*), ed. Stefan Detchev (Sofia: Institut za izsledvane na izkustvata, 2010), 393–396.

the theory of Bulgarian Revival architecture. The theory's continuation was ensured by a deliberate state policy during the strongly nationalist communist era in Bulgaria. Thus the architect Matey Mateev was able to publish his monograph on the big residential *konak*s of the Middle Rhodopes only in 2004, though the manuscript was completed in the early 1960s. The reason for the long delay was that Mateev questioned the mainstream thesis that the representative mansions of the area were evolved versions of the simple folk house. Mateev insisted that it was vice versa—peasant houses were modeled after the *konak*s. Moreover, he indicated that the archetype of the latter was "Oriental" and could be found in the Middle East.[387]

Although alternative opinions are no longer censored, the specialized academic institutions remain rather conservative. Few scholars have advanced such opinions and criticized the national isolationism of mainstream architectural-history scholarship in Bulgaria. Most notable among these are the art historian Mihaila Staynova[388] and, above all, the architect Elena Ivanova. Ivanova's works indicate the broader Ottoman context of the architecture with protruding stories, the possible Central Asian roots of the *çardak* (or the *hayat*), as well as of the symmetrical plan of nineteenth-century urban houses and the Ottoman influence in the Plovdiv "Baroque."[389] However, such specialists seem to be rather the exception. At the same time, mainstream scholars retain the traditional point of view, and paradoxically, they sometimes try to legitimize it through references to the Ottoman architectural context and

387 Matey Mateev, *Srednorodopski konatsi* (Plovdiv: NAA, 2004), 408–415. What made these points even more unacceptable was the fact that, in the 1960s, the communist regime undertook the national homogenization of the Rhodopes, an area with a mixed population and a significant presence of Islam.

388 Staynova, *Osmanski izkustva na Balkanite*.

389 See Elena Ivanova, "Za plovdivskiya prehod ot traditsiya kăm modernost," *Pametnitsi, restavratsiya, muzei* 2–3 (2005): 24–28; Elena Ivanova, "Predmoderni Balkani: edna hipoteza za proizhoda na chardaka," *Pametnitsi, restavratsiya, muzei* 6 (2006): 12–19; Elena Ivanova, "Barokovi prochiti na bălgarskiya XIX vek," *Arhitektura* 5 (2007): 48–51; Elena Ivanova, "Formi, planove, kontseptsii v balkanski lokalni praktiki (XVIII–XIX vek)," *Izkustvovedski cheteniya* (2007): 421–427; Elena Ivanova, "Erkernata arhitektonika v traditsionniya balkanski grad. Kăm drug prochit na 'văzrozhdenskiya stil'," *Izkustvovedski cheteniya* (2010): 234–241; "Za chardachnata kăshta ot XVIII–XIX v. Predislyamski koreni na mezhdinnoto prostranstvo," http://www.protobulgarians.com/Statii%20ot%20drugi%20avtori/Elena%20Ivanova%20-%20Za%20chardachnata%20kaashta.htm (accessed January 20, 2015); Elena Ivanova, "Istoricheskata interpretatsiya na arhitekturnoto ni nasledstvo"; Elena Ivanova, "Arhitektura, identichnost, kulturna promyana v kontaktnata balkanska zona (XVIII–XIX vek)," unpublished manuscript, Architectural Section, Institute for the Study of Arts, BAS, 2006.

to the works of other Balkan scholars. We have already seen the similar case of Nikolaos Moutsopoulos in Greece, who quoted his Macedonian colleague Sotir Tomoski, despite the fact that each of them had his own nationalistic interpretation.

A good example of such a method is provided by the works of Nikolay Tuleshkov, today one of the leading Bulgarian researchers dealing with vernacular architecture and certainly the most prolific.[390] Like Moutsopoulos, Tuleshkov offers a number of valuable analyses of the development of Ottoman architecture and underlines the importance of the Ottoman capital for the formation of the vernacular idiom in the Balkans. His works clearly differ in this respect from the scholarly literature from the 1960s to the 1980s, with its near-total avoidance of comparisons with "non-Bulgarian" heritage. In turn, Tuleshkov refers to both Moutsopoulos and Tomoski, as well as to other scholars from neighboring countries, but again in order to consolidate the traditional Bulgarian reading: that the residential (and even the monumental) architecture of the Ottoman Empire was created chiefly or exclusively by Bulgarian masters and that it thus followed Bulgarian traditions. Tuleshkov decisively rejects concepts such as the "Balkan house" (let alone "Ottoman house") and "Balkan vernacular architecture." For him, these represent none other than the "creations of the Bulgarian Revival architectural and building school."[391]

Despite his knowledge of the history of Ottoman architecture, Tuleshkov adamantly rejects the existence of important master builders in the Ottoman Empire other than Bulgarians. While the identification of Macedonian Slavic masters as Bulgarians is not surprising (this is the traditional point of view in Bulgaria), Tuleshkov claims that Albanian, Vlach, and/or Greek masters, including those of *archondika* in the eighteenth century, were simply Albanianized, Aromanianized, and Graecized ethnic Bulgarians.[392] If there were Muslim master builders, they were allegedly Islamized Bulgarians. If the vernacular heritage in part of Asia Minor looked similar to the Bulgarian heritage, it was because Bulgarian Revival masters worked there and because the local *Karamanlı* masters were descendants of Bulgarians who had settled there before the arrival of the Ottomans. The monumental architecture of the Ottoman Empire is partially appropriated in a similar way. Tuleshkov even goes

390 See, in particular, the volumes of his presentation of medieval and vernacular architecture in Bulgaria: *Arhitekturnoto izkustvo na starite bălgari*, vols. 1–4 (Sofia: Akademichno izdatelstvo, Arh & Art, 2001, 2006, 2011).

391 Tuleshkov, *Arhitekturnoto izkustvo*, vol. 2, 232.

392 Ibid., vol. 2, 131–160.

so far as to claim that "Bulgarian masters" from the Debar region in Macedonia participated in the construction of the Taj Mahal.[393]

In this manner, since the mid-twentieth century, a rather confused concept—"Bulgarian Revival architecture"—has tended to conflate all kinds of architectural heritage, even that which is quite distant historically from the period and geographically from the centers of the Bulgarian national "awakening." The result is certainly dogmatic and, in some cases, strikingly chauvinistic. Ironically, studies on traditional architecture written by Bulgarian scholars today would have sounded unusual to Bulgarians, including Bulgarian architects, a century ago. They believed that this architecture was the legacy of the Ottoman period, and they were able to perceive in it a number of "Turkish" and "Oriental" influences, so undesired by modern Balkan nation-builders. Now let us examine whether the scholars from the country that is identified (and more or less identifies itself) as the legitimate heir of the Ottoman Empire do not offer a somewhat more rational interpretation of the Balkan vernacular house architecture.

From Balkan to Anatolian: The "Turkish House"

So far, we have seen how architects, ethnographers, and other scholars from different Balkan countries invested with a particular national symbolism a specific vernacular house type that is actually widespread in the Balkan region. In this manner, local intellectuals and specialists symbolically appropriated a common architectural heritage from the Ottoman era, transcending the current official or claimed national borders. A fundamental thesis shared by many Balkan "schools" of architectural history (with the exception of the Romanian scholars and, to some extent, the Serbian and Bosnian scholars) was the assumption that the vernacular house in question was only distantly or not at all connected to the age-old Ottoman cultural and political context. To demonstrate this point, local scholars created elaborate reconstructions of historical continuity, according to which the archetype of the Balkan house type was to be found in the simple rural architecture and/or in the Byzantine era or even earlier.

However, Balkan societies initially perceived this house in very different terms. It was often seen as culturally foreign—as a "Turkish house." The term clearly attests to a popular belief in the close relationship between the period of Ottoman domination and the building technique, the interior organization,

393 Ibid., vol. 2, 64.

the general appearance, and the way of life in the Balkan house. In this context, its perception as a "Turkish house" in a Turkish national context would hardly be surprising. The quite probable Ottoman character of this type of building and dwelling should be easily translatable into an ethnic Turkish character. One can thus expect a strong claim of ownership of the vernacular architecture discussed here in the case of modern Turkey as well—if not already in the Ottoman Empire.

Nevertheless, the development of this claim in the Turkish context is far from obvious, for a variety of reasons. To begin with, even though Balkan peoples used to refer to the old timber-framed residential buildings inherited from the Ottoman period as "Turkish houses," this term apparently did not exist in the Ottoman Empire itself.[394] Similarly to the other Balkan cases, these houses became "Turkish" in the Turkish context only when the Ottoman Empire finally ceased to exist. If indeed there was a delay, it was due in part to the complex development of Turkish nationalism in the late Ottoman context. Until World War I, the Ottoman Turkish intellectuals and political figures who identified with the ideals of a Western-type modernization sought to modernize the Ottoman Empire under the contradictory slogans of Ottomanism.[395] The ideology of "Turkishness" finally emancipated itself from the Ottoman references during the War of Independence (1919–1923), led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk against the foreign occupation and partition of the country.

Thus many phenomena were named "Turkish" only after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. This was not merely a change in nomenclature. It was a truly revolutionary innovation, as the old Ottoman traditions (from traditional garments to music and poetry) were abandoned and even banned. Some attributes of the new nation (such as the Turkish language) were "purified" of "Oriental" (Arabic and Persian) influences. Others were invented and, at least initially, presented in purely illusory ways (such as the Turkish pre-Ottoman history).[396] As an "Oriental" rudiment of the "backward" Ottoman era, the traditional houses were not necessarily a heritage that the Turkish republic was interested in keeping as it marched towards Western standards of "modernity" and "progress." So the ideological qualification of these houses as "Turkish houses," or at least this label's diffusion and popularity within Turkish society, was postponed for a certain period.

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394 Cf. Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 71.

395 On Ottomanism, see Alexander Vezenkov, "Formulating and Reformulating Ottomanism," in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. 1, 241–271.

396 On the formation of modern Turkish historiography: Etienne Copeaux, *Espaces et temps de la nation turque. Analyse d'une historiographie nationaliste* (Paris: CNRS, 1997).

At the same time, it must be taken into account that, as in other Balkan cases, in Turkey there is no one type of vernacular house.[397] The Balkan or the Ottoman house type is characteristic of only a part of the country—namely, of Eastern Thrace, the shores of the Sea of Marmara, and the western and northern areas of Asia Minor. These nevertheless include both the Ottoman capital (Constantinople/Istanbul) and the republican one (Ankara). There are also a variety of subtypes in the framework of this territory. The houses of the Pontic area along the eastern part of Anatolia's Black Sea shore do not have the same building techniques as those in Bursa or Eskişehir in the northwest. Often they even have two-sloped "Alpine" roofing, quite atypical of the Balkan and the northwestern Anatolian Ottoman idiom. In the Ankara region, the timber-framed construction is sometimes infilled with masonry of red bricks, which are not covered with plaster—a technique that, curiously, recalls late medieval *Fachwerk* houses in Western Europe, as far away as England.

Istanbul is a distinctive case. Since the late nineteenth century, the exterior of local houses has been systematically covered with a wood board cladding, a technique that gave them a somewhat different appearance than most of the Balkan houses, but which is also common in the Black Sea area, including in Bulgaria. Most of all, the stories in projection were "refined" in the form of oriel windows, and the wooden façades were decorated with elaborate woodcarving, sometimes with Neo-Classical and other Western academic, and even Art Nouveau, elements.[398] We see these elegant "Europeanized" mansions in many areas of Istanbul, especially in districts like Arnavutköy along the Bosphorus or in the Prince Islands (Adalar).

Yet here a specific problem appears, one similar to that encountered in other national contexts. Much of the vernacular house heritage of the country did not belong to the ethnic/confessional majority—in this case, Muslims/Turks. In many cases, these were houses of minorities—Christians (mostly Greeks and Armenians) as well as Jews and others. Today, emblematic places in Anatolia—such as Safranbolu and Amasya—are supposed to demonstrate a quintessential Turkish identity in the vernacular house architecture. Yet what is often neglected is the fact that Greeks and Armenians were among the own-

397 For a presentation of the geographical distribution of the different types: Haluk Sezgin, *Turquie* (Athens: Melissa, 1992), 48–61.

398 See Pierre Pinon, "L'occidentalisation de la maison ottomane," *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre* 1–2 (1994–1995): 38–49. On the urban and architectural transformations of Istanbul in the nineteenth century, see Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1986).

FIGURE 7.8 *Late Ottoman houses in Arnavutköy, Istanbul.*

ers of the local "Turkish houses"; the master builders were also quite often Christians.[399] As might be expected, mansions with Neo-Classical influences were more commonly built in parts of Istanbul and in other cities that had a significant Greek population in the past—such as Izmir (Smyrna) or Ayvalık (Aïvali/Kydonies) on the Aegean coast.

In any case, these subtypes, with their academic evolutions, differ sharply from the vernacular heritage in the rest of Anatolia. In the northeast, a certain continuity is visible with regard to Caucasian (Georgian and Armenian) vernacular architecture, while in the southwest, specific stone houses related to

399 See Reha Günay, *Geleneksel Safranbolu evleri ve oluşumu* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1981), 175. Yet just as in the other Balkan cases, such data do not prevent the use of vernacular houses of minorities to promote the dominant national culture. For instance, the Sadberk Hanım Museum in the Sarıyer district of Istanbul exhibits Turkish-Islamic art and folk traditions (including the celebration of the circumcision [*sünnet*] of a young boy). But it actually belonged to a Westernized Armenian family: Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 64–65.

Aegean Greek architecture are to be found in Bodrum/Alikarnassos. In some mountainous areas there are wooden log houses, again quite different from the Balkan idiom. In southern/south-central and southeastern Anatolia, we find single-storied rural houses built of sun-dried bricks (*kerpiç*) and with flat roofs. In Harran (Upper Mesopotamia), conspicuous beehive houses recall similar conic dwellings across the border with Syria. Turkish architectural historians never neglect to mention that sun-dried brick was a very ancient building material in the area. They relate it in particular to the Hittites, the ancient Anatolian people whom Kemalist historiography alleged to be the protohistoric ancestors of the Turks.[400]

The urban houses of the same area (Cappadocia, the former Western Armenian territories, and southeastern Anatolia) are mostly built of stone. For this reason, they have a different appearance from the Balkan and the northwestern Anatolian house (flat roofs, ornate stone façades, etc.) as well as distinct plans (centered on an inner court). Only some minor elements of the interior organization or the exterior—like the cantilevered but, normally, stone-built stories in projection—recall the Ottoman Balkan type. Specialists such as Cerasi believe that these dwellings testify to an ancient and stronger tradition of construction, much more firmly rooted in the area than the timber-framed house. Cerasi refers concretely to a post-Roman Mediterranean ("Greek" and "Arab") culture of building in the eastern Mediterranean area, including southern Anatolia.[401]

In this context, it is clear that in the competition for the "typical Turkish" dwelling, a preference for the Balkan house idiom is by no means self-evident. Why should the ephemeral timber-and-infill houses of the north and the west (without taking into account all those outside Turkey) represent the Turkish house par excellence, and not the stone-built mansions with elaborate façades found in Kayseri or Ürgüp in central Anatolia or in (Şanlı)Urfa and Diyarbakır to the southeast? Indeed, these were often built and/or inhabited by Armenians, Orthodox Christians (Greek-speakers or Turkish-speakers known as *Karamanlides*/*Karamanlılar*), or Kurds and Arabs. But as already mentioned, the situation with the Ottoman houses in the Northwest was similar: in both cases, Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and others lived in the same types

400 Cf. Sezgin, *Turquie*, 28, 56; also Doğan Kuban, *The Turkish Hayat House* (Istanbul: Eren, 1995), 16.

401 The stone houses of the latter are certainly affiliated with the "Arab house," particularly with the western Syrian court house: Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 121, 130, 149.

of dwelling.[402] Moreover, as Cerasi emphasizes, the Anatolian stone-built mansions influenced Ottoman monumental and palatial architecture more deeply than the timber-framed house did. Sinan, the famous architect of the Classical Ottoman sixteenth century, came from the Kayseri region in central Anatolia as well.[403] Nevertheless, it was precisely the timber-framed Ottoman (or Balkan) house that has been chosen, since the 1930s at least, as the most emblematic type of "Turkish house" (*Türk evi*). In order to explain this choice, it is necessary to return to the architectural and ideological context of the nineteenth century.

As already stated, this was the period when Western influences gradually colonized Ottoman architecture—including house and even Islamic religious architecture. Baroque and Rococo influences were amalgamated with Empire and with other Western academic idioms: in Istanbul mosques even appeared in a Neo-Gothic style. The Dolmabahçe Palace in the Beşiktaş district, built in the mid-nineteenth century by Ottoman imperial architects, members of the famous Armenian Balyan family, is certainly the most representative example of the eclectic mix that Ottoman architectural practice underwent during the Tanzimat period. From the 1860s on, European and Levantine architects working mainly in the Ottoman capital also tried to elaborate a particular Ottoman expression in modern architecture—a specific *style néo-ottoman*.[404]

Not surprisingly, the result was often excessively Orientalist, and in many cases it did not have much to do with Ottoman traditions. The same references

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402 It must be noted that it is not always easy to distinguish the northern and western Anatolian (and Balkan) type from the varieties in southern and southeastern Asia Minor. Throughout the nineteenth century, the latter were partially "Balkanized" (for instance, with the addition of wooden projections), and typical Ottoman *konak*s appeared in places such as Adana, (Kahraman)Maraş, or (Gazi)Antep in southeast Anatolia (see Sezgin, *Turquie*, 51). Neo-Classical, Neo-Baroque, and other "European" influences are not limited to the Balkan type either, as similar elements appeared in central, southern, and southeast Anatolia: Mustafa Akpolat, "Developments in House Architecture in the Western Part of Southeastern Anatolia after the Tanzimat Reforms," *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 4 (2001): 1–26.

403 See Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 121, 125.

404 On the definitions of Ottoman identity in nineteenth-century architecture: Ahmet Ersoy, "Architecture and the Search for Ottoman Origins in the Tanzimat Period," in *History and Ideology: Architectural Heritage of the "Lands of Rum,"* ed. Gülru Necipoğlu, special issue of *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 117–140. On Istanbul architecture by the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, see Pierre Pinon, "Les paradoxes de l'occidentalisation de l'architecture à Istanbul à la fin du XIX^{e} siècle," *Romantisme* 131 (2006): 51–59; *Istanbul 1900: Art Nouveau Architecture and Interiors*, eds. Diana Barillari and Ezio Godoli (New York: Rizzoli, 1996).

to Moorish architecture in Spain or to Mamluk Egypt that Austro-Hungarian architects employed in Bosnia also appeared in Istanbul. Examples include the Gateway of the Ministry of Defense (1867, today Istanbul University) or the Terminal of the Orient Express (1889, today Sirkeci Station). As Ottoman art was treated as part of "Islamic" art, architects with European training "discovered" its erstwhile models in Alhambra, Cairo, and Iran. By the twentieth century, the Orientalist models were translated into the decorative language of Art Nouveau in the works of Alexandre Vallaury and Raimondo D'Aronco. Curiously enough, some designs of the latter in Istanbul recall works of Ion Mincu in Romania and thus attest to a common *esprit du temps* in the search for architectural expression inspired by "local" traditions.[405]

However, the Constantinople buildings designed by Armenians, Greeks, Levantines, and Western Europeans soon came to be considered foreign architecture and even the result of an artistic colonization by the West. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the first generation of modern Muslim/Turkish architects emerged. They dedicated themselves to the creation of a "genuinely" Ottoman modern style in architecture, and in Turkish architectural history their works are called the "First National Style" or "First National Architectural Movement" (*Birinci Ulusal Mimarlık Akımı*). This movement's representatives—Vedat Tek, Kemaleddin (or Kemalettin), and Arif Hikmet Koyunoğlu, as well as the Italian Giulio Mongeri—tried to "purify" the Neo-Ottoman architectural language. They sought to rid it of its Arabic and Persian traits and employ instead elements of the Classical Ottoman monumental architecture. A series of public buildings were designed by the representatives of the movement, mostly between the Young Turk Revolution (1908) and the end of the 1920s. Thus in its final decade, the First National Style was transferred from Istanbul to the new republican capital, Ankara, as well as to other major cities in Anatolia.

In fact, the style mirrored the ideology of Ottomanism supported by the Young Turks: it was a "patriotic" architecture aiming to assert a specific Ottoman identity.[406] Although this identity was articulated by official propaganda as a supra-ethnic and supra-confessional loyalty to the Ottoman state, the "core" community of the Ottomanist project was the Muslims. Not surprisingly, the first "national" architects' choice in favor of Ottoman monumental architecture actually imposed the Islamic religious architecture of the Empire as a main source of models and elements for new constructions. Traditional house archi-

405 Popescu, "Le paradoxe de l'orientalisme balkanique."

406 See Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building*, 20.

tecture was virtually ignored. Even when Vedat Tek had to build a family house in the district of Nişantaşı in Istanbul, he used few elements of the vernacular house (such as volumes in projection), while the repertoire of the monumental architecture (pointed arches, etc.) is more than visible. The long eaves in many creations of the First National Style evoke in a way traditional Ottoman houses, although such an element is present in the palatial architecture as well (e.g., the Topkapı Palace). One of Kemaleddin's buildings—the Harikzedegân Apartmanları in the Laleli district in Istanbul (1922, today the Crowne Plaza Old City Hotel)—is also dominated by "Baroque" curved pediments, and it conspicuously recalls the Bulgarian references to the houses in Plovdiv—a town where Kemaleddin had designed the railway station.

The ideological message of this kind of Ottoman Revivalism was complex, and perceptions of it evolved rapidly. On the one hand, despite its largely Ottoman design, it was interpreted by leaders of the Young Turk Committee of Union and Progress and by their followers during the early republic as a "Turkish" national style. The Ottoman forms were thus recharged with a strictly Turkish identity.[407] Not coincidentally, a symbolically highly important building for Turkish nationalism was created in the same style: the Ankara headquarters of the Turkish Hearth Society (*Türk Ocağı*) (today the State Fine Arts Museum), designed by Arif Hikmet Koyunoğlu and completed only in 1930. Founded in 1911, Turkish Hearth brought together the first Turkish nationalists, from Ziya Gökalp to Mustafa Kemal.

On the other hand, the Turkish Hearth headquarters was perhaps the last building of the First National Style. Atatürk was personally dissatisfied with the latter, in part because it evoked the Ottoman past.[408] Ironically, the First National Style was not national enough—at least not for the newly established Turkish republic. With its Ottoman Islamic forms, it served instead to consolidate an Ottoman identity that the new republican regime had banished. Thus although it played a certain role in the development of a Turkish architectural identity, by the end of the 1920s, the First National Style no longer looked politically correct. The republican Turkish architects had at best an ambiguous attitude towards the works of Kemaleddin and Vedat Tek, which they saw as a futile revival of Ottoman formal elements.[409]

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407 Ibid., 21; see also 34–46.

408 Cf. Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 193.

409 See Sibel Bozdoğan, "Reading Ottoman Architecture through Modernist Lenses: Nationalist Historiography and the 'New Architecture' in the Early Republic," in *History and Ideology*, 124–126.

The first alternative that the Kemalist authorities found involved a radical break with anything that might be seen as Oriental, in order to catch up with modern Western civilization. By the early 1930s, the regime favored the adoption of international Modernist models known as *Yeni Mimari* ("New Architecture"). German and Central European specialists took the leading positions as state architects, engineers, and professors of architecture in Turkey. In the early 1930s, austere, unadorned public buildings and houses—called *kübik* ("cubic") and inspired by Bauhaus and other Modernist trends—mushroomed in the capital city of Ankara and elsewhere.[410] But by the mid-1930s, the *kübik* Modernism was publicly criticized as too international and cosmopolitan. This was the time when republican cultural politics in Turkey were greatly inspired by the examples of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.

As a result, the architecture from the late 1930s and the 1940s adopted new models from Rome and Berlin. A series of public buildings from this period were built in what can be described as a stripped-down monumental (Neo-)Classicist style. Although it contained references to ancient Greek and Roman archetypes, the "Fascist" Classicism of the late 1930s and the 1940s[411] was actually dominated by the idea of creating a genuinely national Turkish architecture (*Milli Mimari*). In Turkish architectural history it is called the "Second National Style" (*İkinci Ulusal Mimarlık Akımı*). The classical architectural language of the new idiom referred symbolically to the heritage of Anatolia: Kemalist ideology identified the area as the erstwhile historical home of "Turkishness." Moreover, it was the stronghold of Kemal's movement during the War of Independence. In the Second National Style, Anatolia's Classical heritage was assimilated into a certain vision of "Mediterranean civilization"—the reference that we saw in Romanian and other Modernisms within the region. Yet this time, this civilization was allegedly inherited by the Turks. It was held to start with the Sumerians and the Hittites, the earliest "ancestors" of the Turkish people.[412] Hittite and Mesopotamian decorations as well as Turkish folk motifs (for instance, from traditional carpets) found a place in the exterior and interior of the new public buildings.

The Second National Style was thus marked by a certain turn to vernacular traditions, which ultimately led to the "discovery" of the "Turkish house." This process was made possible by the entanglement of several logics. On the one

410 For an extensive presentation and analysis of the *Yeni Mimari*: Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building*, 56–239.

411 Its greatest monument was in fact completed only in 1953: this was the Mausoleum of Atatürk (*Anıtkabir*) in Ankara, designed by Emin Halid Onat and Ahmet Orhan Arda.

412 See Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building*, 279–289.

hand, although traditional houses belonged to the Ottoman period, they had little to do with the monumental Islamic religious architecture of the Empire: thus they did not contradict the secularism of Kemalist ideology. On the other hand, they were not cosmopolitan but local—vernacular—and the vernacular architecture was imagined, just like in other national contexts, to be a creation of the national spirit incarnated in the peasant folk.[413] Moreover, similarly to other Balkan cases, certain principles of architectural Modernism led to the reappraisal of the old wooden houses typical of the Balkans and—more importantly for the Kemalist symbolic geography—typical of (a large part of) Anatolia.

In fact, this valorization had already begun under the Young Turks. In 1909, Celal Esad Arseven, the leading art historian of the late Ottoman and the early republican periods, gave special attention to domestic architecture in a work published in Paris.[414] The first intellectual to discuss the qualities of the "Turkish house" (as early as 1912) seems to have been Hamdullah Suphi (Tanrıöver), the president of the Turkish Hearth Society, which was mentioned earlier.[415] The headquarters of the society in Ankara also included a "Turkish salon" (*Türk salonu*) inspired by the interior of traditional houses.[416] By the end of the 1920s, Koyunoğlu, the architect of the Turkish Hearth building, published articles in which he praised the "modern" qualities of these houses. According to him, they met all modern hygienic requirements and necessary conveniences (light, ventilation, warmth, etc.).[417] It must be noted that, in the 1930s, European architects working in Turkey encouraged the study of vernacular heritage. In the spirit of Koyunoğlu, the French archaeologist and architectural historian Albert Gabriel claimed that traditional houses in Istanbul had modern features.[418]

In mid-1930s, the "Turkish house" was finally placed at the center of architectural theory by modern Turkey's most important architect: Sedad Hakkı Eldem. Acquainted with the Bauhaus movement during his stay in Germany

413 Ibid., 255.

414 Celal Esad Arseven, *Constantinople, de Byzance à Stamboul* (Paris: Laurens, 1909).

415 Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 74–76.

416 In the early 1930s, "Turkish rooms" (*Türk odaları*) appeared in private apartments as well: see Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 66–74.

417 Meanwhile, authors such as Ahmet Süheyl Ünver (physician, writer, and art historian) also praised the characteristics of the "Turkish house": Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 89–93, 98–99. Bertram extensively presents the way traditional houses were depicted in late Ottoman and early republican fiction (103–189) and painting (78–85).

418 Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 209; see also Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building*, 256.

and with Le Corbusier in France, Eldem had criticized the First National Style in the 1920s. In contrast with that style's ornamentalism, Eldem tried to create a truly modern architecture inspired by Turkish national traditions. In 1934, he began teaching a seminar on "national architecture" at the Fine Arts Academy in Istanbul. The defining element of this architecture was the "Turkish house" (*Türk evi*). Eldem's studies were essentially typological: he put forth a series of classifications of houses according to their interior plans, window types, roofing, and so on. His voluminous research was, however, published only in 1954, while his complete documentation and ideas on the Turkish vernacular house heritage appeared thirty years later.[419] In any case, Eldem's seminar created a school: Eldem sent his students to various places in the country, where they were supposed to document (with drawings, photographs, measurements, and so on) the remaining vernacular houses. Not surprisingly, the works on traditional architecture published after World War II—authored by his students—largely expressed his ideas.

Sedad Hakkı Eldem was not preoccupied with hypotheses concerning the origin of what he regarded as the "Turkish house." Like the Modernist architects discussed above (such as Neidhardt, Grabrijan, and Pikionis[420]), he admired the folk wisdom of traditional constructions, as he presumed these to have a simplicity and rationality reflected in a series of "modern" features. These included the plan of dwelling, its lightness, transparency and ventilation, sensitivity to the site, and relationship to nature. Eldem did not fail to mention Le Corbusier's interest in the traditional houses in Turkey. He emphasized that Le Corbusier "lifts his houses upon stilts, reserving the ground for services, garage, etc., just like our storages" (located at the ground level of the house).[421] Eldem did not forget to emphasize likewise the interior elements mentioned by his colleagues in other Balkan countries, such as built-in furniture (niches and built-in wardrobes) instead of heavy portable furniture, as well as wide seating places (the *sedir*).[422]

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419 Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Türk evi plan tipleri*, 3 vols. (Istanbul: İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi—Mimarlık Fakültesi, 1954); Sedad Hakkı Eldem, *Türk evi: Osmanlı dönemi*, 3 vols. (Istanbul: Türkiye Anıt Çevre Turizm Değerlerini Koruma Vakfı, 1984–1987).

420 For a comparative study of the views shared by Pikionis and Eldem: Eleni Bastéa, "Dimitris Pikionis and Sedad Eldem: Parallel Reflections of Vernacular and National Architecture," in *The Usable Past: Greek Metahistories*, eds. Keith Brown and Yannis Hamilakis (Lanham, MD; Boulder; New York; and Oxford: Lexington Books, 2003), 147–169.

421 Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building*, 261.

422 Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 208.

As a result, Eldem developed a Modernist image of the "Turkish house," which was identical to that of the "Bosnian house" or the "Macedonian house" promoted by Neidhardt and Grabrijan in Bosnia and the Republic of Macedonia. Ironically, Neidhardt and Grabrijan Orientalized the same "Turkish house" that Eldem presented as so modern. It must be noted that Eldem's theory is part of a broader trend in Turkish art and architectural history, which manufactured its own "Orient." Namely, art historians such as Celal Esad Arseven and Behçet Ünsal praised "Turkish art" as superior to the other Islamic artistic traditions. They saw it as rational art, which was able to develop—like "European art." By contrast, the Turkish specialists Orientalized Arabian and Persian traditions as excessively ornamented and frozen in time.[423] Thus while Neidhardt and Grabrijan imagined the vernacular heritage of the Balkans to be simple and rational, in contrast with the exuberantly decorated "Oriental" Turkish architecture, Turkish scholars did the same with regard to the latter in its relationship to Arabian and Persian heritage. They moved the boundary of the "Orient" eastwards and presented the Turkish heritage as intrinsically Western and modern.[424]

Led by both Modernist and nationalist motives, Eldem turned the Ottoman timber-framed house into a defining element of Turkish national architecture. As Carel Bertram puts it, he "catapulted the old wooden house into the position of the Turkish house par excellence."[425] Yet one can still ask why. Why did Eldem choose the same type of dwelling as the other Balkan architects—the one readily found throughout much of (though not all of) Turkey, when it was common to a number of other countries? In 1928, when Eldem exhibited sketches of "Anatolian houses" in Paris and Turkey, he also presented the mud-brick and the stone dwellings of Anatolia. In the 1930s and 1940s, Eldem referred to features of these in some of his projects.[426] Furthermore, the Modernist cubic architecture of *Yeni Mimari* was sometimes seen as a continuation of the Anatolian vernacular models with flat roofs; these were, moreover, put into a long historical continuity going back to the ancient Anatolian cultures.[427]

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423 On the Turkish nationalist appropriation of Ottoman monumental architecture: Bozdoğan, "Reading Ottoman Architecture through Modernist Lenses."

424 The "modern" character of traditional Turkish houses is regularly emphasized by Turkish scholars: e.g., Sezgin, *Turquie*, 68–69.

425 Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 210.

426 Sibel Bozdoğan, "The Turkish House Reappraised," in *Sedad Eldem: Architect in Turkey*, eds. Sibel Bozdoğan, Süha Özkan, and Engin Yenal (Singapore: Concept Media, 1987), 54–55.

427 Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building*, 256–258. In the early 1930s, Arseven emphasized the similarities and the supposed continuity between the building techniques of the Hittites and those of the Anatolian peasants: ibid., 246.

Most likely, Eldem chose the timber-framed house because of the influence of another great master of Modernism: Frank Lloyd Wright. Eldem was especially intrigued by Wright's prairie houses, with their romanticism, closeness to nature, and—not least—their use of wood, along with stone. Thus, while Le Corbusier's Cubist constructions tended to orient Eldem to other vernacular varieties, it was probably Wright's example that directed him to the timber-framed constructions.[428] Further research is needed to evaluate to what extent the marginalization of the other Anatolian house types was the result of a certain Orientalist marginality of southeastern Anatolia in modern Turkish mental geographies. The timber-framed houses are typical of parts of the country that are closer to "Europe," including Istanbul and Ankara, the centers of the social, cultural, and scholarly elite, while the other varieties are typical of territories that are stigmatized as "Oriental" in Turkey itself.

Sedad Hakkı Eldem used in his designs a number of elements from the traditional timber-framed house, such as protruding stories, cantilevers, four-slope roofing, and long eaves. As early as 1936, he applied such elements in the house of Ahmet Ağaoğlu in Maçka (including a "Baroque" oval *sofa* and rounded form of *şahnişin*). It was followed by other buildings referring to vernacular forms such as that of the Faculties of Sciences and Letters in Istanbul (1944, with Emin Halid Onat) and the Taşlık Coffee House (1948). Initially, this design did not persist in modern Turkish architecture, and for a time it effectively remained Eldem's personal language. As mentioned earlier, the Second National Style followed instead the Italian and German models of monumental Classicism;[429] from the 1950s on, modern Turkish architecture embraced new Western influences. Some of Eldem's masterpieces were torn down, including the emblematic Taşlık Coffee House, inspired by the seventeenth-century *yalı* of Amcazade Köprülü Hüseyin Paşa.

Yet in the 1970s, the "Turkish house" became an object of preservation policies resulting from the interaction of various actors—state institutions, experts, and organizations of "civil society"—as well as, to a large extent, supranational bodies such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe.[430] Since the 1980s, a number of new residential neighborhoods and gated communities res-

428 For other possible influences: Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building*, 261.

429 Some of Eldem's works express the same spirit, such as the monumental colonnade at the ground level of the building of the Faculties of Sciences and Letters, which was inspired by the Stuttgart Railway Station (designed by Paul Bonatz, who worked in Turkey in the 1940s and the early 1950s).

430 For a detailed analysis of this interaction: İpek Türeli, "Heritagisation of the 'Ottoman/Turkish House' in the 1970s: Istanbul-Based Actors, Associations and Their Networks,"

urrected the nostalgic image of the "Turkish house." Traditional elements, such as stories in projection, wooden cladding, and tiled four-slope roofs appeared in the design of upper-class mansions, whose exterior is sometimes almost a replica of a house from the Ottoman period.[431] Moreover, the "reconstruction" (with modern materials) of traditional houses is central to current projects of renovating historical neighborhoods in Istanbul. It has resulted from gentrification policy combined with the promotion of a "Neo-Ottoman" way of life favored under the AKP (Justice and Development Party).[432] Thus, ironically, vernacular timber-framed houses—praised by Eldem for their Western-like "modernity"—are today instrumentalized by a political ideology focused on the rehabilitation of the Ottoman past and of Islamic traditions against the Kemalist forced secularization.

To explain the "renaissance" of the traditional dwelling, one must certainly take into account the scholarly work and the publicizing of vernacular heritage by the school that Eldem created. Especially important for this success is the *Turkish* identity associated with the houses of the Ottoman period. As already stated, Eldem was not so interested in the genealogy of his symbolic creation, the "Turkish house." Yet this is a theme that has preoccupied a number of scholars, both in Turkey and abroad. Some of these authors suggested alternatives to the other Balkan theories about the origin of the timber-framed architecture (Slavic, Illyrian, the references to ancient Greek and Byzantine archetypes, etc.).[433]

Perhaps the most striking interpretation put forth by Turkish scholars is that proclaiming the ancient Turkic tent as the archetype of the vernacular house from the Ottoman period. It comes as early as 1928, in Arseven's work *Türk Sanatı* (Turkish Art).[434] The idea might seem exotic, but one must take into account possible influences in this case coming from other national contexts. For instance, Chinese scholars had traced the origins of China's earliest

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European Journal of Turkish Studies 19 (2014), http://ejts.revues.org/5008 (accessed January 20, 2015).

431 See Sibel Bozdoğan, "Vernacular Architecture and Identity Politics: The Case of the 'Turkish House,'" *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 7 (1996): 7–18.

432 See Nora Şeni, "La tentative néo-ottomane et la rénovation du quartier Süleymaniye," *Urbanisme* 374 (2010): 41–42.

433 Turkish scholars were frustrated by the appropriations of "their" vernacular architecture by their Balkan colleagues such as the "Bulgarian house" and the "Greek house": Türeli, "Heritagisation of the 'Ottoman/Turkish House.'"

434 Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House*, 95. Among the points that made possible this surprising association was the etymology of the term *oda* ("room"), held to come from the old Turkic *otağ* ("tent").

circular houses and temples from the form of the tent. Not coincidentally, Emel Esin, another Turkish art historian, sought the origin of the Turkish house in the Chinese kiosk tradition, allegedly mediated by the Turkic Uyghurs.[435] Hence Turkish authors tried to show that the typical plan of vernacular houses, with the arrangement of rooms around a central axis and their scant furniture, derived from the organization of the tent, which their "ancestors" brought from Central Asia. This theory was asserted, for instance, by architecture professor Önder Küçükerman, who also disseminated it abroad through a book published in English.[436]

The tent theory, however, was not accepted by a number of specialists, both Turkish and foreign. In their case, the exchange with Balkan scholars and with colleagues from other countries—for instance, from the Soviet Union—proved to be useful. For instance, some of them embraced the theory that the *megaron* type of building was a precursor of the house with open *hayat*. As we saw, this thesis was used by Greek authors to substantiate their idea that the Balkan house was typically Greek. Used by Turks, the *megaron* allowed the symbolic rooting of the timber-framed house in the ancient soil of Anatolia—the presumed age-old stronghold of Turkishness. The research of Soviet specialists in Central Asian archaeological sites (such as the Merv oasis in Turkmenistan) likewise had an impact on the formulation of contemporary Turkish theories. Very important were the works of Galina Pugachenkova, Soviet art historian and archaeologist, on Central Asian square buildings with axial *eyvan*s dated before the eleventh century.[437] The plan with *eyvan* (*iwan*) communicating with rooms situated around it presumably entered Ottoman vocabulary through Seljuk *medrese*s and other buildings of the twelfth and thirteenth century. Authors such as Haluk Sezgin propose theoretical models showing how the Central Asian house with *eyvan* merged with the *megaron* in order to produce the "Turkish house."[438]

Another approach is proposed by Doğan Kuban in his research on the "Turkish *hayat* house." The scholar criticizes the tent theory of the origin

435 Cf. Kuban, *The Turkish Hayat House*, 38–39.

436 Önder Küçükerman, *Turkish House: In Search of Spatial Identity* (Istanbul: Türkiye Turing ve Otomobil Kurumu, 1978).

437 See Galina Pugachenkova, *Puti razvitiya arhitektury yuzhnogo Turkmenistana pory rabovladeniya i feodalizma* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo ANSSSR, 1958); Galina Pugachenkova, *Iskusstvo Turkmenistana. Ocherk s drevneyshih vremen do 1917* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1967).

438 Sezgin, *Turquie*, 24–25. I am particularly grateful to Prof. Machiel Kiel for sharing with me Pugachenkova's studies and his own reading of the theories on Turkish vernacular architecture.

of Turkish vernacular architecture, even if he admits "strong similarities" between the organization of the Turkish room and that of the ancient Turkic tent.[439] He also rejects the focus on the centralized plan, attributed to traditions from Central Asia, as a defining element of the Turkish house architecture. According to Kuban, this plan was actually alien to the early Turkish house concept, and it was only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that it became popular, particularly under Western European influence. Instead of the room arrangement and the centralized plan, Kuban refers to the *hayat* as "the most conspicuous style-creating element" of the Turkish vernacular house. At the same time, he points to a number of Eastern Mediterranean/Middle East sources of this element. He deems ancient architectural features, such as the Hittite *hilani*, the Mesopotamian *tarma*, the Arabian *bayt*, and the Iranian *talar*, to be the archetypes of the Turkish *hayat*. According to the researcher, "since the Hittite period, the idea of a porch in front of a recess has had a continuous existence."[440]

It is largely beyond the scope of the present study to evaluate just how probable are the ancient origins suggested by Doğan Kuban and other researchers of the "Turkish house." Yet like the Greek theoretical models discussed above, Kuban postulates the historical relationship mostly on the basis of plan typologies and formal analogies with temporally distant contexts. This method certainly makes Kuban's theory no less hypothetical than, for instance, that of Nikolaos Moutsopoulos in Greece. Also betraying a conspicuous nationalist bias is the fact that Kuban ultimately locates the origin and the core territory of the traditional house with *hayat* in Anatolia.[441] He attributes the presence of this house type in the Balkans to the migration of the Turkish population and the development of an "Anatolian-Turkish society" there. Thus the same timber-framed house that was appropriated as national in Balkan theories finds its new homeland farther east, in Anatolia, i.e., in the Kemalist heartland of Turkishness. Kuban likewise explicitly rejects the term "Ottoman house" as too "loose," thus ultimately Turkifying the timber-framed houses with *hayat*.

Certainly, in today's Turkish context, using the term "Ottoman" is by no means a guarantee against nationalist claims: it could be easily equated with "Turkish" and "Anatolian." This does not mean that there are no critical studies and debates in contemporary Turkish scholarship around the concepts of

439 As well as possible "memories of tent life" and rudiments of "nomadic behavior" in the way of life in traditional houses: Kuban, *The Turkish Hayat House*, 45.

440 Ibid., 24.

441 Ibid., 14.

"Turkish house," "Anatolian house," and "Ottoman house."[442] However, these debates barely influence popular perceptions, which today—much more than during the lifetime of Sedad Hakkı Eldem—invest the old timber-framed architecture with a national meaning.

Conclusion

As a result of the influence of architects, art historians, and ethnographers, since the early twentieth century, a vernacular house type from the Ottoman era has come to be considered an important national heritage across the Balkans. This positive reappraisal was, initially, largely an individual initiative of specialists educated mostly in Western and Central Europe, as well as foreigners. Gradually, professional organizations of architects and academic institutes managed to raise national authorities' and public awareness of what was imagined to be the value of traditional architecture. At different times, Balkan states adopted the required normative framework for heritage protection, but vernacular houses entered the list of valuable monuments only slowly. In general, it was mostly during the second half of the twentieth century that Balkan countries developed an efficient institutional network that helped preserve the remains of the vernacular architecture, particularly of the Balkan or Ottoman house type.[443]

Examples of it were diligently restored in many traditional settlements and quarters. In cases such as Melnik in Bulgaria's Pirin region or Soğukçeşme Street in Istanbul (located between Hagia Sophia and the Topkapı Palace), dilapidated timber-framed dwellings were "beautified" in the process in a way that impressed visitors to, and even owners of, the houses. In some cases, houses that had been demolished decades ago were rebuilt. And, of course, open-air museums appeared, such as the Etăra in central north Bulgaria (opened in

442 See, for instance, Tülay Artan, "Questions of Ottoman Identity and Architectural History," in *Rethinking Architectural Historiography*, eds. Dana Arnold, Elvan Altan Ergut, and Belgin Turan Özkaya (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 85–109. For a discussion of the nuances between the terms "Turkish house," "Ottoman house," and "Anatolian house" in Turkish scholarship: Uğur Tuztaşı and İlgi Yüce Aşkun, "'Türk evi' idealleştirmesinde 'Osmanlı evi' ve 'Anadolu evi' kavramlarının ortaklıklarına ilişkin işlevsel açıklamalar," *Bilig* 66 (2013): 273–296, http://yayinlar.yesevi.edu.tr/files/article/737.pdf (accessed January 20, 2015).

443 For this process in Greece and in Turkey, see, respectively, Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," and Türeli, "Heritagisation of the 'Ottoman/Turkish House.'"

1964), or the recently inaugurated "ethno-village" in Gorno Nerezi near Skopje, where traditional Balkan houses were either reconstructed, transported from elsewhere, or constructed in pastiche form. Currently, the last option is particularly dictated by the interests of the tourist trade, and the new residential architecture of gentrified districts often adopts the formal idiom of a house type whose "national identity" is already obvious to the target inhabitants. Thus, developed by scholars working individually in the early twentieth century and even later, the theories of Ottoman-era vernacular architecture are already part of different "banal nationalisms."

As seen above, these national theories are generally founded on the thesis that the Balkan vernacular house type has ancient pre-Ottoman roots. While Turkish scholars have sought these roots in Central Asia, the ancient Near East, and Anatolia, most of their Balkan colleagues have favored Byzantine archetypes—which also were often nationalized as medieval "Greek," "Old Bulgarian," or other architecture. Yet such claims are more than hypothetical.

The Greek specialist Charalambos Bouras presents several important arguments against any strong thesis of continuity between Byzantine and Ottoman house architecture:[444] 1) the limited knowledge we have of Byzantine houses and the likely considerable variety of house types prior to the fall of Constantinople in 1453; 2) the gap of evidence for the houses between the fifteenth and eighteenth century: very few houses in Greece and elsewhere in the Balkans could be dated with certainty to the seventeenth century; 3) a side counter-proof: when "it was at its most flourishing, the biggest part of even the ecclesiastical architecture did not follow Byzantine styles";[445] 4) features that are often considered to be Byzantine because they appear in Byzantine illustrations and descriptions—such as the enclosed volumes in projection—are common solutions in wooden frame structures and could be found virtually everywhere, for instance, in Western Europe; 5) tall houses built like towers that existed both before and during the Ottoman era are also a common

444 Bouras, "The Approach to Vernacular Architecture," 30.

445 Ibid. Furthermore, in many cases this architecture actually acquired a distinctively Ottoman style. Indeed, most of the Ottoman features that we find in Orthodox Christian religious architecture in the Balkans are often explained by Balkan scholars in a retroactive manner: as Byzantine/pre-Ottoman features adopted by the Ottomans. Yet in some cases, the Ottoman Islamic influence is beyond doubt—for instance, the distinctive mosque-like construction of churches of the Saint John Bigorski Monastery (around 1800) and of the village of Lazaropole (1841) in the Republic of Macedonia. These are, however, located in the Debar/Reka area, the birthplace of the most famous Slav Macedonian master builders. The problem, unfortunately, lies beyond the scope of the present work.

solution in times of insecurity; here the comparison with Mystras and other Byzantine sites yields no evidence of continuity.

To these arguments, Bouras adds a further indication of discontinuity, at least on the level of construction methods. The terminology used by Greek and Balkan craftsmen demonstrates a large-scale adoption of the Ottoman Turkish lexicon, often of Persian and Arabic origin, instead of the old Byzantine terms. Indeed, throughout the Balkans, master builders and inhabitants of houses commonly used terms such as *bina* ("building"), *yapı* ("construction"), *çatma, payanda, bağdadi* (elements of the timber-framed construction), *duvar* ("wall"), *tavan* ("ceiling"), the aforementioned *oda, hayat, sofa, çardak, köşk, şahnişin, konak*, and many others.[446] This fact contradicts another common thesis found in Greek, Bulgarian, Macedonian and Albanian interpretations. It is the idea that "native" builders (whom their compatriots often called by the Ottoman terms *dülger*, "carpenter"; *mimar*, "architect"; *usta*, "master"; *kalfa*, "journeyman"; etc.) and their guilds (referred to with the Ottoman terms *esnaf, bölük, taife*/*tayfa*, etc.) preserved a purely autochthonous building know-how.

As Inès Gaulis asks about the Greek *isnafia* (= *esnaf*), so cherished by the architect Nikolaos Moutsopoulos: how was it possible that they only *spread* architectural models? Given their mobility, was not it possible that they also adopted models from elsewhere?[447] In fact, in a clear contradiction of their own postulates, specialists such as Moutsopoulos admit that "the essential training of those building corporations happened in Constantinople, in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, in Istanbul."[448] It was there that Greek and other Balkan builders acquired certain techniques and aesthetic models. Available data confirm this: in 1845, when the house of the Plovdiv Armenian merchant Artin Gidikov burned down, he took a local master to Istanbul in order to see what a nice and representative mansion would look like, so the master could build a similar one for him.[449]

Undoubtedly, the exclusive focus on (master) builders typical of Greek, Bulgarian, and other mainstream theories tended to generate not only biased but also completely distorted interpretations of Ottoman architecture—vernacular and monumental alike. Indeed, in the nineteenth century, builders

446 While trying to demonstrate the perfectly Bulgarian character of this architecture, the Bulgarian scholar Nikolay Tuleshkov provides an impressively long list of Ottoman terms related to building culture in Bulgaria: Tuleshkov, *Arhitekturnoto izkustvo*, vol. 2, 425–436.

447 Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 125.

448 Moutsopoulos, "Kastoria," 136.

449 According to Konstantin Dufev, *Dostolepie bălgarsko*, vol. 1 (Plovdiv: Svetlostruy, 1998), 291.

from geographical Macedonia, Epirus, Albania, and Bulgaria engaged in extremely important activity not only in the Balkans but also in Anatolia, and even in the Near East and African territories under Ottoman rule. Moreover, as Balkan scholars never fail to emphasize, initially Ottoman building culture was clearly influenced by Byzantine architecture. It would nevertheless be quite simplistic to treat Ottoman architecture in the old way, as a mere offspring of Byzantine architecture.[450] During the Ottoman Classical era, Christian builders, particularly Balkan Christians, were subordinated to Muslim masters. As Cerasi puts it, the latter (Turks, Persians, Central Asians) were "responsible for most of the work that required refinement and taste."[451] By the end of the eighteenth century, the situation changed dramatically, with Balkan masters, especially Christians, assuming the vast majority of the building tasks. Balkan masters certainly introduced their own tastes in their designs. But conversely, they had already acquired a certain Ottoman architectural idiom.

Like their Greek, Macedonian, and Albanian colleagues, Bulgarian scholars have tended to attribute the creation of all kinds of Ottoman monuments to the genius of their own nation's master builders. Yet even in the nineteenth century, these were often simple executors of projects drafted by foreign architects and engineers.[452] In Istanbul and in Edirne, Bulgarian master builders had the intermediary professional status of *kalfa*s, not of masters.[453] In general, the Balkan scholarly focus on nineteenth-century master builders seems to be blind to a series of questions: the way building activity was ordered and organized during the several centuries of the existence of the Ottoman Empire; the particular system of recruitment of masters and workers and the way it changed over time; and the transformation of the social profile of clients that gave Balkan builders an increased presence starting at the end of the eighteenth century and the reasons why this presence was necessarily more limited before.[454] Moreover, it does not take into account the differences between the Ottoman context and the way building activity was organized in the pre-Ottoman period, particularly in the Byzantine Empire. In fact, specialists in this area, such as Charalambos Bouras, believe that the *esnaf* are a

450 On the complex relationship between the two, see Robert Ousterhout, "Ethnic Identity and Cultural Appropriation in Early Ottoman Architecture," *Muqarnas* 12 (1995): 48–62.

451 Maurice Cerasi, "Late-Ottoman Architects and Master Builders," *Muqarnas* 5 (1988): 90.

452 As noted by the son of Gencho Kănev, one of the greatest Bulgarian master builders: Dabko Usta-Genchev, "Prinos kăm zhivota i deynostta na Usta-Gencho Kănev," *Spisanie na BAN* 26 (1923): 132.

453 Tuleshkov, *Arhitekturnoto izkustvo*, vol. 2, 242, 245.

454 On this set of questions, see Cerasi, "Late-Ottoman Architects and Master Builders."

typical Ottoman organization and that the Greek *isnafia* clearly appeared in the eighteenth century.[455]

Indeed, one cannot exclude *a priori* the possibility that individual features of the Ottoman house type had more ancient roots. Porches and verandas oriented towards a courtyard or protruding volumes were certainly not invented only within the Ottoman Empire. These and other elements—the window distribution, the specific roofing, the room organization, the plan with central hall, or the symmetrical plan—could be either Roman and Byzantine, or Syrian, Persian, Caucasian, or Central Asian. Some of them could also be Genovese, Venetian, or Central European.[456] Most likely we will never know for sure. The search for "archetype" in this case is largely in vain. At the same time, it seems undeniable that the first buildings that demonstrate forms, organization, and decoration particularly close to those of the Balkan houses from the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries are examples of "high" Ottoman architecture in Istanbul.[457] Hence it is likely that, when speaking exclusively of the "Balkan house," we are forgetting the cultural context that made possible the crystallization of "Balkan" cultural phenomena, including on the Asian shores of the Aegean, the Sea of Marmara, and the Black Sea, or even in Cyprus and the Crimea.

The case of the Balkan or Ottoman house type, with its different national appropriations, is not unique. Analogous "nationalizations" characterized (and still characterize) many aspects of the traditional culture shared by the nations of the Balkan area, from folk costumes to cuisines, from traditional customs to folk legends and of course music, as the documentary film *Whose Is This Song?* points out.[458] Apart from the constructed and "invented" character of nationhood, these cases reveal a paradoxical aspect of modern cultural history in general: the extent to which modernity advanced through traditionalism. The case of the vernacular architecture shows how universal projects, academic theories, and cosmopolitan movements such as Modernism in architecture sometimes ended up backing parochial claims. Although the Balkans were

455 Gaulis, "L'Architecture traditionnelle de la Grèce du Nord," 141. See Charalambos Bouras, "Master Craftsmen, Craftsmen, and Building Activities in Byzantium," in *The Economic History of Byzantium*, 539–554.

456 See Cerasi, "The Formation of Ottoman House Types," 131, 133, 134, 139.

457 For instance, the Imperial Pavilion (*Hünkâr Kasrı*) adjacent to the Yeni Mosque / Valide Sultan Mosque (mid-seventeenth century): Kizis, "'Episimi' kai 'paradosiaki' architektoniki," 280.

458 *Chiya e tazi pesen?* directed by Adela Peeva, 2003. For the Bulgarian share of similar appropriations, see the contributions in the collective volume *V tărsene na bălgarskoto: mrezhi na natsionalna intimnost* (*XIX–XXI vek*), edited by Stefan Detchev.

still quite rural in the first half of the twentieth century, modern urban culture there entailed nostalgic references to a lost rural purity and to the traditional way of life in vernacular dwellings. And the final paradox: throughout the Balkans, these vernacular dwellings were indeed identified mainly with urban architecture, whose high-style models were clearly identifiable in the palatial idiom of an empire that was unanimously perceived in a typical Orientalist manner. However, as they themselves came from a non-Western periphery, Balkan architects had little choice but to adopt and positively reevaluate the Orient. In this way, the Orient also became their symbolic key to the much-desired European modernity.

CHAPTER 8

Block No. 18, Auschwitz

Rossitza Guentcheva

On May 14, 1977, the Bulgarian National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement officially opened its permanent exhibition at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim, Poland, located on the site of the biggest and most notorious Nazi concentration and extermination camp during World War II, where approximately 1.1 million people were killed.[1] By the time the Bulgarian national exposition was fully installed, the Auschwitz memorial museum had seen the inauguration of a number of other national pavilions, owing chiefly to the initiative of former inmates and their relatives. In 1952, these individuals were constituted as the International Auschwitz Committee, entrusted by the museum to supervise commemoration. Although the Auschwitz concentration camp became a state museum as early as 1947, with a main permanent exhibition to serve as a "historical document" for Nazi atrocities, death camp survivors pushed for an additional—national—commemoration of the victims.[2]

1 A shorter, earlier version of this text was presented at a conference entitled "The Contradictions of Heritage" in Plovdiv on March 9, 2014. I am grateful to all participants for their comments and suggestions. I would also like to thank a host of people and institutions for helping me locate sources and experts; giving me information, documents, and advice; or letting me take pictures of museum artifacts. I am particularly grateful to Szymon Kowalski, deputy director of the archives at the Auschwitz museum, to Teresa Zbrzeska and Mirosław Obstarczyk from the Exhibitions Department at the Auschwitz museum, to Günter Morsch, director of the Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen, to Erika Perahia Zemour, director of the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, to Nikos Stavroulakis, former director of the Jewish Museum of Greece, to Anastasia Loudarou and Orietta Treveza from the Jewish Museum of Greece, to Éva Hoppál from the Central Library of the Hungarian National Museum, and to Hristo Hristov, Ivan Elenkov, Jelena Petrović, Liliana Deyanova, Odette Varon-Vassard, Olga Manojlović-Pintar, Peter Ápor, Rumen Avramov, and Tchavdar Marinov. I am also grateful to the volume's core team—Alexander Vezenkov, Diana Mishkova, Roumen Daskalov, and Tchavdar Marinov—as well as to Liliana Deyanova for their valuable comments on the draft chapter.

2 The vision of national commemoration stands behind the very decision of 1947 to preserve the concentration camp "forever, as a Monument to the Martyrdom of the Polish People and Other Peoples." See Kazimezh Smolen', *Osvientsim 1940–1945. Putevoditel' po muzeyu* (Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1981), published by the Council for Preservation of the Monuments of Struggle and Martyrdom.

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The first national exhibitions to be established were those of Czechoslovakia and Hungary in 1960; they were followed the next year by those of the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic. By 1969, three more national pavilions had been created: those of Yugoslavia (1963), Belgium (1965), and Denmark (1968).[3] By the time the exhibit prepared by the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement in Sofia arrived in Auschwitz, some of the existing national expositions had undergone transformations—like those of Hungary and GDR, both of which were renovated in 1970.

This chapter will trace the changing dynamics of representation of the victims of World War II through one building of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum—Block No. 18, which is the former home of the Bulgarian national pavilion, the future home of the Greek national pavilion, and the present home of the Hungarian national pavilion. The text will start with the history of an exhibition—the Bulgarian national exhibition in Auschwitz, which is no longer there—as an example of the transnational politics of commemoration and representation in the communist era. Attention will be paid to its creation, short life span, and closing in the context of the troubled and often difficult relations between museums in the socialist countries prior to 1989. The chapter will elucidate the transnational pressure on the Bulgarian curators and will reveal the process of making decisions in the increasingly complex field of visualization of the memory of World War II. Then the text will stay centered on the particular space where this exhibition was set and will cover the intricacies and predicaments of staging the Greek national exhibition in the beginning of the twenty-first century at the same place—an exhibition that is not yet there. The chapter will finish with a discussion of the Hungarian national pavilion, with its novel principles of representing victims of mass murder and giving tribute to absence. Occupying the first floor of the building continuously from 1960 to the present day, it is itself a telling representation of the transformations in displaying the memory of the Holocaust during the last half-century.

The focus of the present chapter is Auschwitz's Block No. 18—a single building, a physical, material, and architectural structure. In placing a particular edifice at the heart of my research, I am inspired by two outstanding

3 Joachim Neander, "The Image of Auschwitz in History Politics," http://www.jst.ufl.edu/image_script.html. National pavilions continued to open in the next two decades as well: in 1978 and 1979, Austria and France established theirs at the Auschwitz museum, in 1980 Italy and the Netherlands did so, and in 1985 Poland did so. The beginning of the twenty-first century witnessed new developments in the pattern of national commemoration, which will be described later in the chapter.

endeavors dedicated to single buildings. Victor Buchli has written his pioneer work on the archaeology of socialism, investigating the restructuring of the material world in the famous Narkomfin communal house on 25 Novinsky Boulevard in Moscow. A masterpiece of Constructivist avant-garde architecture designed by Moisei Ginzburg and Ignatiy Milinis and built in 1928–1932, it was the embodiment of the Soviet state's grandiose project of providing "good life for the greatest number of people."[4] Focusing on the individual households at the Narkomfin building gave Buchli the opportunity to examine the micropowers at work in Soviet everyday life in 1930–1991, and the citizens' negotiation of domestic architectural space in a context of rapidly changing social contingencies.

The second study is Yuri Slezkine's inquiry (still unfinished) on the House of Government in Moscow. The edifice, located on the embankment in front of the Kremlin, opened in 1930 as the home of top Soviet governmental officials and a model for the communist organization of daily life. Crucial for Slezkine's historical ethnography is the fact that during the Stalinist purges of 1937–1938, half of the building's residents—around 400 people—were arrested, killed, or sent to the gulag while their families were exiled or transferred to other communal apartments. As such, the House of Government constitutes a veritable microcosm of Russian Bolshevism, revealing the rise and quick demise of this social utopia.[5]

As will become clear later in this chapter, Block No. 18 was not exclusive in this sense—it was one of twenty-eight identical blocks used to house camp inmates on the territory of Auschwitz I (the "main camp," which covers an area of 20 hectares and now features fifty-seven original buildings and other facilities from 1940–1945). Yet it is selected as the centerpiece of this text not only for methodological reasons but also because it is the material structure bearing the memory of Nazi crimes and making possible the most eloquent representation of human absence. Narrating the changing patterns of representations of the victims of World War II through the past, future, and present of the exhibition spaces of Block No. 18 will undoubtedly make the presentation of the three cases of national memory uneven in terms of detail and approach. Tracing the debates around three national pavilions in the Auschwitz museum means asking distinct questions and explaining divergent fates. Moreover, the national institutions involved in their design and establishment are widely different and motivated by varying sets of political and museological considerations. Yet such a path is both challenging and inevitable, especially when

4 Victor Buchli, *An Archeology of Socialism* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1999), 2.

5 Gerd Koenen, "The Art of Condensation," *Köpfe und Ideen*, 2014.

analyzing the shifting representations of the nationality of victims and when reflecting on the larger processes of nationalization and, for that matter, transnationalization of memory.

The 1977 Bulgarian Pavilion at the Auschwitz Museum

The Bulgarian exhibition at the Auschwitz state museum was the biggest and most important transnational endeavor of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement during the whole communist period and in the entire history of the institution, which was established in 1950 and closed in 1993.[6] It appeared as a task in the museum's yearly plan for 1974, with a deadline set for the end of 1974 and listing three curators as responsible for its design.[7] In spite of the plan, it took the museum two more years to prepare the exhibition, which was installed at Auschwitz in two stages, in 1976 and 1977. The yearly plan of the museum for 1977 details the activities surrounding the second phase of the installation of the exhibition. This involved the signing of contracts with the team tasked with the exposition's artistic implementation (the workshop, artist, architect, electrical engineer, etc.), the sending of the thematic plan to the Bulgarian embassy in Warsaw and to Poland, making copies of the material objects, discussing the scheme of the exposition, the elaboration of the photos in the appropriate size, the approval of the exposition in Sofia, the transport of the exhibit to Oświęcim, and the official opening of the exposition in Oświęcim.[8] It was one of the most expensive exhibitions of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement—it cost 25,000 leva

6 On September 11, 1944, the newspaper *Fatherland Front* appealed to the population in Bulgaria to gather documents, posters, flags, and other materials demonstrating the fight of the Fatherland Front during World War II and its victory over fascism. In 1947, a National Exhibition on Resistance was established at the National Committee of the Fatherland Front; this was the precursor of the Museum of the Revolutionary Movement, inaugurated in 1950. In 1975, it became the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement. The museum hoped to survive the political, social, and cultural turbulence of 1989 by transforming itself into a National Museum of Political Parties and Movements (1990). However, it was liquidated in 1993 for political and financial reasons, as well as the pending restitution of its building. See the historical account of the archival collection "Museum of the Revolutionary Movement" of fond 275 at the Central State Archives in Sofia (hereafter TsDA).

7 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 30, l. 4.

8 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 31, l. 4.

FIGURE 8.1 *Block No. 18, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.* PHOTO: ROSSITZA GUENTCHEVA, 2013.

in 1977 alone, while all other expositions of the museum received a total of 20,000 leva that year.[9]

On April 14, 1977, a group of nine representatives of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement traveled to Oświęcim in order to complete the installation of the Bulgarian exposition. They included the deputy director of the museum, an architect, an artist, two woodcutters, two electricians, and a worker to do the upholstery for and to paint the exhibition hall.[10] It was officially opened a month later by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Ognyan Doynov, in the presence of party and state leaders of the voivodeships Bielsko Biała and Oświęcim, representatives of the Union for Freedom and Democracy from Oświęcim and Krakow, the Bulgarian ambassador to Poland, citizens, and students.[11] The exhibition was located on the ground floor of Block No. 18.

9 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 48, l. 7.

10 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 58, ll. 11–12.

11 Archives of the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereafter AMVnR), op. 34, a.e. 2230, ll. 35–36.

The Bulgarian exhibition consisted of two rooms totaling approximately 200 sq. meters. It was entitled "The Bulgarian Communist Party—Leader in the Fight against Capitalism and Fascism (1891–1945)." It consisted of 327 items, duly listed and described in the exhibition "scenario," translated into Polish and registered at the Auschwitz museum archive on March 24, 1977.[12] Among the 327 items were thirty-seven texts, twenty-eight reproductions of original documents, nine objects (flags of guerrilla squads, a poster, and a weapon belonging to a resistance fighter), seven maps, and two diagrams; the rest were photographs. The first 204 items, covering the period between 1891 and the spring of 1941, were chronologically arranged in the first hall, whereas the exposition in the second hall was dedicated to World War II, starting with June 22, 1941, and the inscription "That is how everything began."

The exhibition emphasized several topics, starting with the establishment of the first Bulgarian revolutionary Marxist party in 1891 and its founder, Dimităr Blagoev. There followed photographs of strikes and workers' manifestations and reproductions of appeals of leftist figures against World War I. Two photographs marked the celebration of the October Revolution of 1917 in Bulgaria and the First Congress of the Communist International in Moscow in 1919. Another photograph showed a demonstration on May 1, 1922, under the slogan "Down with fascism!" Particular attention was paid to the 1923 overthrow of the government of Aleksandăr Stamboliyski, leader of the Bulgarian Agrarian Party, which the exhibition characterized as a military fascist coup against a government that served the interests of peasants and workers. The exhibition explicitly emphasized the subsequent September 1923 uprising, centered in northwestern Bulgaria. A quote from Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev underlined its importance: "The September Uprising was the first open clash with fascism. It was led by a revolutionary party that had embarked on the road of class struggle under the guidance of renowned leaders such as Dimităr Blagoev, Vasil Kolarov, and one of the most resolute theorists of Marxism-Leninism, activist of the international communist movement, the great son of the Bulgarian people, Georgi Dimitrov." A substantial part of the exhibition was dedicated to the Leipzig trial of 1933 and the leading role of Georgi Dimitrov in the world struggle against fascism. A text on the wall read: "In 1933, German fascists set fire to the Reichstag building and initiated the Leipzig trial

12 Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu. Dział Archiwum, Scenariusze, t. 39, k. 25–86. The scenario is not preserved in the fond of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement at the Central State Archives in Sofia. It may have been lost in 1978, when a burst heating pipe flooded the museum building on National Assembly Square 11, destroying much of the museum's documentation for the period 1960–1977.

FIGURE 8.2 *The 1977 Bulgarian Auschwitz exposition.*
PHOTO: COURTESY AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU STATE MUSEUM, NO DATE.[13]

with the aim of striking a blow against the German Communist Party and the international workers' movement. However, it was Georgi Dimitrov who, from the defendant's bench, struck the first moral and political blow against fascism and became the spokesman for the antifascist struggle in the world." The exhibition then focused on the participation of Bulgarians in the Spanish Civil War and the international interwar leftist movements in Europe, followed by a condemnation of Hitler's attack on Poland in 1939 and the entrance of German military troops into Bulgaria in 1941.

The exposition in the second hall started with a copy of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party's appeal against Hitler's aggression and in support of the USSR's just war against it. It narrated episodes of the guerrilla struggle of Bulgarian partisans, demonstrated the harshness of the battle against both German and Bulgarian fascists, and showed the resistance fighters' "ultimate victory" with the socialist revolution of September 9, 1944. Finally, the exhibition focused on Bulgarian soldiers' participation in the fight

13 I am grateful to the head of the Exhibitions Department at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Teresa Zbrzeska, who gave me all fifty-three photos of the 1977 Bulgarian exposition held by her department.

against Hitler's armies in late 1944 and in 1945 on the territory of Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Austria. The exhibit ended with a quote from Bulgarian communist leader Todor Zhivkov, stating that nearly half a million Bulgarian soldiers took part in the fight against German fascism, 32,000 of whom lost their lives.[14]

Given that the purpose of the national pavilions in Auschwitz was to commemorate the victims—martyrs—who were exterminated in the death camp during World War II, it is interesting to see how the Bulgarian exhibition related to this goal. Although its main message was the triumph of communist ideology and the successful struggle against fascism, it also commented on the victims of fascism. Among the first victims to be identified were the "many thousands of Bulgarian communists, peasants from the People's Agrarian Union, and the United Front—socially active scholars, writers, artists, lawyers, and physicians" who died in the fight against fascism in the summer of 1923–1924. The exhibit featured eighty-four photos of people who were killed or perished during those years in Bulgaria. The human losses of the Bulgarian resistance fight during World War II were also listed—and depicted using twenty-two photographs of fallen partisans. There were two photos of a concentration camp, but this was the Krăstopole concentration camp. (This camp was opened on September 1, 1941, near Xanthi, on the territory of Western Thrace, occupied by Bulgaria in April 1941 as a result of the German-Bulgarian alliance. Activists of the Bulgarian Communist Party opposing the pro-German Bulgarian government were sent there.) No indication was given that it had been used as a labor camp for Jews as well. The exhibit featured eight photos of victims who were exterminated in the concentration camps of Buchenwald, Dachau, Flossenburg, Mauthausen, Gurs, and Treblinka—among them Atanas Berov, Pencho Vatsev, Todor Bonev, Martin Pavlov, and Petăr Yovchev. Two of those photos were of collective victims and were captioned: "Bulgarians—victims in the concentration camp [Dachau and Gurs]." Karl Kandulkov was identified as "Bulgarian" in a group photo entitled "Buchenwald, 1945."[15] Some of the victims were also identified as students, fighters in the Spanish Civil War,

14 The spirit of the exposition was entirely in line with the rest of the work of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement at that time. Among the topics the museum curators explored in parallel were the participation of children and teenagers in the armed fight during World War II, the involvement of Bulgarians in the struggle of the German people, and the underground locations used by the Bulgarian Workers' Party, as well as the illegal printing presses, the partisan movement in the country, the activity and the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Youth Union, and the mass struggles of the workers in Bulgaria in 1941–1944. TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 31, ll. 8–11.

15 Karl Kandulkov, who studied architecture in Dresden during World War II, survived the war and returned to Bulgaria; he later became mayor of the city of Gabrovo. In 1988,

and participants in the Slovak National Uprising. In the whole Bulgarian exhibition, there was only one photo of a victim from the Auschwitz concentration camp—item No. 286 was a photo of Nikola Popov, who perished in Oświęcim. Jews were mentioned only once as well—item No. 39 showed a "Jewish house in Sofia, set on fire by a gang of fascist conspirators, May 24, 1921."

The Life of the 1977 Bulgarian Exhibition—Transnational Experiences

In 1986, in a statement addressed jointly to the Department of Ideological Policy at the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Department of Cultural Cooperation at the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Department of Cultural and Historical Heritage at the Bulgarian Committee on Culture, the director of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement, Professor Boris Mitov, while acknowledging that the exhibition in Oświęcim had already become outdated, declared that it was still "our newest exhibition abroad, prepared on the largest scale, and with the highest artistic and scholarly qualities."[16] Nevertheless, even in 1977 the exposition failed to comply with the museum's own criteria of what constituted a "good exhibition." A 1976 report of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement set forth new standards for a successful exposition: "decreasing the textual component and increasing emotional engagement," "the use of technical tools (maps, diagrams, and sound)," and the "inclusion of more material objects." It continued: "Perhaps we should think about a more contemporary format . . . of exhibitions traveling to other countries—and above all to our partner museums—one that features original objects from our [collections]. The photo exhibitions, taken in their pure form, do not achieve the necessary result and emotional impact. This is a huge problem that is worth thinking about and discussing in the near future."[17]

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together with Dimităr Dichkov, Kandulkov co-authored the memoir *A Road through Buchenwald* (*Păt prez Buchenwald*), published in Sofia.

16 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 58, l. 14.

17 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 40, ll. 2, 12. In 1976, the collections of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement contained only 5,100 material objects but also included 19,200 original photos, 14,300 documents, over 10,000 memoirs, 15,000 newspapers and journals, 6,000 volumes of Marxist literature, and 91,000 photo negatives. The report found the collection's composition problematic. It bemoaned the small number of material objects and set the goal of doubling their amount by 1981. The next report on the structure of the collection criticized the museum's activities in 1977, when only 64 material objects were

Over the next decade, until the demise of the socialist regime, the museum staff did think about and debate at length the quality of the Bulgarian Auschwitz exhibition. As early as 1978—one year after the official opening—the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement requested 10,000 Polish złoty for "corrections and additions" to the Bulgarian pavilion in Oświęcim, to cover the daily expenses and accommodation of two people as well as to buy lamps and other materials.[18] Although the late 1970s and especially the 1980s saw a mounting worldwide recognition of the fact that the majority of the victims of fascism, including those in Auschwitz, were Jewish, this never became a concern of the Bulgarian curators. Until 1989, the creators of the Bulgarian pavilion reacted mainly under international pressure, and most of all after the Polish management of the Auschwitz memorial museum asked them to fix technical flaws.

In the early 1980s, the Bulgarian Auschwitz exposition continued to be plagued by technical problems. In 1983, the management of the Auschwitz museum informed a curator of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement who visited the pavilion about the necessity of making "transformations and additions" and repeated this request in writing.[19] It called for "mending the fallen letters in the main text (or placing new letters altogether), repairing the lamps in the glass windows, replacing the missing flags with new ones, and renovating the floorboard." It also made suggestions for improving the content by supplying "new information on the history of Bulgarian martyrdom as well as the participation of Poles in the Bulgarian resistance fight." The Bulgarian martyr whom the Auschwitz memorial management wished to see incorporated in the Bulgarian exhibit was Nikola Katsarov. Katsarov, a tailor, was a participant in the Czechoslovak underground leftist movement during World War II. He was sent to Auschwitz in February 1942 and perished there in July of that same year. The letter to the Sofia museum specified that Katsarov was registered in the death camp under No. 25692 and that there was a photo of him at the archives in which he was initially—and mistakenly—identified as a Pole.[20] The Auschwitz museum director also recommended that the Bulgarian pavilion display information on Polish citizen Halina Danilchuk, who arrived in Bulgaria as a student of classical philology and archeology and who joined a Polish-Bulgarian underground group there in 1939. After being arrested and

registered, but praised its efforts in 1978, when 316 material objects were collected. TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 41, l. 7.

18 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 32, l. 18.

19 AMVnR, op. 42, a.e. 3663, l. 4.

20 AMVnR, op. 42, a.e. 3663, l. 5.

sent to prisons in Berlin and then in Prague, she was brought to Auschwitz in January 1943, where she was killed in April 1943.[21]

The National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement failed to comply with the requests of the Auschwitz museum director. The lack of response prompted the Polish museum to contact the Bulgarian embassy in Warsaw, which sent one of its representatives to Oświęcim to separately assess the damage to the exposition. Nikolay Rusanov, first secretary and head of the consular section, went there at the end of 1984 and admitted that "some of the photos are faded, some of the texts have plastic letters missing, and parts of the carpet are damaged."[22] The Bulgarian Foreign Ministry's subsequent communications with the museum in Sofia did not bring about the necessary overhaul of the Bulgarian pavilion, and thus another member of the staff of the Bulgarian embassy in Warsaw visited Oświęcim in 1985. After seeing the museum and talking to its director, the second secretary of the embassy, Petăr Zlatev, concluded:

> At the moment, the exhibition really needs renovation, for some of its elements are damaged. The defects are the following: the welter floor has big stains because of humidity, so it either has to be replaced or washed well with special chemicals; the star from the Bulgarian coat of arms has been lost; two flags have disappeared (one national, the other one a museum object); around 20 luminescent lamps in the horizontal glass windows have burned out (it is impossible to find such lamps in Poland, that is why all 60 lamps may need to be replaced), letters from two of the texts (100 × 50 cm) have fallen out and are lost. . . . The director added that they wanted the whole Bulgarian exhibition to be renovated, if possible, as is the practice of the rest of the socialist countries.[23]

In a comment accompanying this note, the Bulgaria ambassador to Poland, G. Georgiev, indicated that on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the victory over Hitler's Germany and militarist Japan, museum curators from the USSR and Hungary were working to renovate their national pavilions.[24]

This increased diplomatic pressure also failed to bring about the desired changes. Throughout 1985, the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement attempted to persuade the Bulgarian Cultural Center in Warsaw

21 AMVnR, op. 42, a.e. 3663, l. 6.

22 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 58, l. 14.

23 AMVnR, op. 42, a.e. 3663, ll. 2–3.

24 AMVnR, op. 42, a.e. 3663, l. 1.

to make the corrections, but despite the numerous promises of its director, nothing was done.[25] In 1985, the Auschwitz museum asked for additional assistance from the Bulgarian cultural and information center in Krakow, which also sent a representative to Oświęcim to evaluate the Bulgarian pavilion.[26] The center's representative, A. Radeva, promised that the problems with the Bulgarian exhibit would be solved yet failed to specify a deadline. This prompted the management of the Auschwitz museum to send a new letter in 1986 to the Bulgarian embassy in Warsaw, complaining again about the persistent lack of response, insisting on the same transformations, and demanding urgent intervention from the Sofia museum. The Bulgarian ambassador to Poland notified the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sofia, adding that "in our opinion, securing the impeccable appearance of the Bulgarian exposition in Oświęcim is a question of national dignity, and it is imperative to constantly ensure its maintenance."[27] The Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, writing also to the Department of Ideological Policy at the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, expressed further concern that the current shape of the Bulgarian exposition in Oświęcim "places our country in a very awkward situation, not only as regards this museum's management but also in relation to its hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world."[28]

As a result of these concerted transnational efforts, in July 1986 the artist of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement, Simeon Mladenov, was sent to the Bulgarian pavilion in Oświęcim "to see and repair the exposition."[29] He found 10 sq. meters of new wall-to-wall carpet on the spot and replaced the damaged part of the carpet; he also repaired the lighting in the glass windows in one of the exhibition halls. In his report to the chairman of the Bulgarian Committee on Culture, Mladenov asserted:

> For a period of ten years—for our exposition was made in 1976–1977—the rest of the participating countries have changed their exhibits twice, while at the moment the USSR and Czechoslovakia are doing so for the third time. Every two years, a specialist from the respective country examines the state of the national exhibition, whereas experts from countries that have glass cases in their pavilions go there every spring in order to clean them. After seeing the exhibitions of the other countries,

25 AMVnR, op. 43–16, a.e. 709, ll. 14–15.
26 AMVnR, op. 43–16, a.e. 709, ll. 2–3.
27 AMVnR, op. 43–16, a.e. 709, l. 1.
28 AMVnR, op. 43–16, a.e. 709, l. 4.
29 AMVnR, op. 43–16, a.e. 709, l. 8.

> I have made the following conclusions. The majority of them are built with durable materials. The floors are covered with marble, ceramic tiles, or special durable colored paste. The exhibits rely on video programs and sound. They contain artistic products like series of graphic works, sculptures, and some applied art, like stained glass, gobelins, etc.[30]

Thoroughly impressed by the international experience in the Auschwitz museum, Mladenov proposed that the new Bulgarian exhibition use durable materials, some videos, and sound, as well as paintings of famous Bulgarian artists. He concluded that Bulgaria lacked neither the vigor nor the means to make its new pavilion in Oświęcim a powerful instrument for popularizing Bulgarian history and culture.

It is clear from Mladenov's report on the restoration he carried out that he did not touch the content of the exposition, although it remains unclear why the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement did not want to include in the exhibit the Bulgarian tailor and the Polish student who were exterminated in Auschwitz. As the museum itself confirmed when evaluating Mladenov's work in Block No. 18, "All imperfections have been corrected. The exposition is in the same shape as at the time of its official opening."[31] Perhaps the Auschwitz museum management's request was ignored because the museum in Sofia was planning a complete renovation of the Bulgarian exposition. The museum director, Boris Mitev, acknowledged that it had remained one of the oldest and already was "not conforming to contemporary requirements" (despite being "impressive and strong in the beginning"). Furthermore, he said, as the Polish colleagues had stressed many times, the rest of the national pavilions had been renovated two or even three times. He asked for financial resources so that his institution could prepare an entirely new Bulgarian Auschwitz exposition, to be completed at the end of 1987 or the beginning of 1988.[32] An elaborate plan, whose implementation would cost the Bulgarian government 115,000 leva, envisaged twenty-one tasks for the next two years. The work was to start with dismantling the current exhibition and buying carpet, wood, paint, electrical materials, and textile for the exhibition cases, and end with international transport and the expenses for translation of the brochure. The project also made provision for 2,000 leva

30 AMVnR, op. 43–16, a.e. 709, l. 9. The 1986 restoration cost the Bulgarian state around 25,000 leva. TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 58, l. 17.

31 AMVnR, op. 43–16, a.e. 709, l. 6.

32 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 58, l. 16.

for writing up the scenario, 10,000 leva for sculptural works (*plastiki*), 10,000 leva for photographs, and 5,500 leva for musical equipment.[33]

The representatives of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement operated not only under the pressure of the Polish Ministry of Culture, the leadership of the Auschwitz-Birkenau museum, or the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry and the Bulgarian embassy and cultural centers in Poland. Functioning in a larger transnational context, they developed their views after seeing similar exhibitions in other concentration camps and comparing their own national pavilion to others. This involved visits not only to Poland but also to Austria and East Germany. In 1970, the museum director, Stoyan Stoimenov, reported to the head of the Bulgarian Committee on Art and Culture:

> I have visited the Mauthausen concentration camp and museum. Here I checked the place where the Bulgarian monument to the victims of Nazism will be erected. Experts at the Institute for Documentation of the Austrian Resistance showed me a card indicating that there were twenty Bulgarians there. Monuments have been erected by the USSR, Poland, Yugoslavia, Albania, France, Luxembourg, GDR, Belgium, and other nations that have suffered losses in the resistance against Hitler's barbarity. We have to pay very serious attention to our monument, for all the other monuments are highly artistic creations.[34]

The Bulgarian Mauthausen memorial—"The Bulgarian Antifascist" by sculptor Lyubomir Dalchev and architect Vladimir Rangelov, 1975–1976—is similar to the monuments of USSR and Albania, symbolizing freedom and the victory of socialism.[35] The raised hand that stands simultaneously for the defeat of fascism and the triumph of the new communist order is a recurrent topos of socialist Bulgarian expositions in various concentration camps. Before it was included in Mauthausen and Auschwitz, it was part of the Bulgarian national exhibition at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in East Germany. In

33 AMVnR, op. 43–16, a.e. 709, l. 16. As a point of comparison, the average monthly salary in Bulgaria in 1987 was 234 leva, according to the National Statistical Institute in Sofia. See http://trudipravo.bg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1054&Itemid=134.

34 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 59, l. 5.

35 Hildegard Schmid and Nikolai Dobrowolskij *Fotografie, Kunst, die einem Kollektiv entspricht . . . Der internationale Denkmalhain in der KZ-Gedenkstätte Mauthausen* (Vienna: BMI, 2007), 147. The inscription on the monument, which is currently under reconstruction, quotes Georgi Dimitrov: "The fight against fascism must be linked to the fight against the threat of war."

fact, the Bulgarian expositions at Sachsenhausen and nearby Ravensbrück were the first permanent exhibits abroad of the Museum of the Revolutionary Movement, both opened in the early 1960s. In a 1969 letter he wrote to the secretariat of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the museum director, Stoyan Stoimenov, argued that a new exhibition would catapult Bulgaria's exhibition to among the top ranks of any nation represented at the Sachsenhausen museum, while a mere facelift would put it "on the average level," noting that Yugoslavia, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR had already made alterations to their exhibits.[36] Despite the fact that both exhibitions were renovated (in Sachsenhausen in 1973 and in Ravensbrück in 1974), a 1983 visit of three members of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement to the Museum of European Resistance in Sachsenhausen found that "it is old-fashioned and must be redesigned, especially because it borders on the refashioned expositions of GDR and Czechoslovakia."[37] Continuing the transnational competition, in 1986 the museum director, Boris Mitov, repeated that "a new exhibition is needed in Sachsenhausen, GDR, which—in comparison with the other national expositions there—is overelaborate and too detailed."[38]

Although the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement had a permanent exhibition in Auschwitz, it did not have an official agreement for cooperation with the Auschwitz museum in the 1970s and 1980s. Although the management of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement expressed concern about this fact on several occasions, what the museum's director complained about the most was the lack of formal collaboration with fellow Balkan museums, those from Yugoslavia and Romania. Had he been able to secure an agreement with the Yugoslav Museum of the Revolution of the Yugoslav Nations and Ethnic Minorities in Belgrade, responsible for the Yugoslav national pavilion in the neighboring Block No. 17 in Auschwitz, the two museums could have shared their common experiences. A 1982 report of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement on cooperation with partners stated:

36 TsDA, f. 1B, op. 36, a.e. 730, ll. 102–103. The Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party granted 60,000 leva to secure a place among the best.

37 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 59, l. 15.

38 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 47, l. 14. For more on the national exhibitions in the Sachsenhausen museum, established in 1961, see Susanne Zur Nieden, "Das Museum des antifaschistischen Freiheitskampfes der europäischen Völker," in *Von der Erinnerung zum Monument. Die Entstehungsgeschichte der Nationalen Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen*, ed. Günter Morsch (Oranienburg: Edition Hentrich, 1996), 255–263.

> The cultural convention of the People's Republic of Bulgaria with Yugoslavia and Romania, signed four or five years ago, requires our cooperation with their respective museums. Each year, we are sending them invitations and draft cooperation contracts. From Yugoslavia, we have no response whatsoever. The Romanians diplomatize [*sic*]. During personal, almost yearly meetings with the [museum] directors from the socialist countries, Mr. Cearoiu, director of the Romanian museum, promises a swift reply; this, however, never happens. Recently they started excusing themselves by saying they are cooperating with the Georgi Dimitrov Museum. Consequently, we do not have regular and official cooperation with the museums of these two neighboring countries. So far they have relied on our hospitality multiple times. Our opinion is that agreements for direct cooperation with the sister museums from these two neighboring countries must be signed. Since we have repeatedly asked them to do that without result, we might need assistance from the Committee on Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[39]

But even without explicit cooperation, it was obvious that the Bulgarian and the Yugoslav national pavilions shared some exhibition principles. The Yugoslav pavilion of 1988 did take a different approach in listing the names of the 15,000 victims from Yugoslavia who were exterminated in Auschwitz. However, like its Bulgarian counterpart, it exhibited sculptures (of Auschwitz survivor Vida Jocić)[40] and relied on images of hanged antifascists to represent cruelty and inhumanity. Another recurring commonality was the emphasis on the resistance struggle and the leading role of the communist parties.

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The planned new Bulgarian exposition in Auschwitz did not materialize. The sweeping political, cultural, social, and economic changes in the socialist bloc after 1989 affected the way Auschwitz victims would be commemorated from then onwards and transformed the meaning and legacy of the death camp. In 1990, a new Auschwitz council was established under the direction of the Polish Ministry of Culture, which was "charged with redesigning the museum and monuments at Auschwitz, reorganizing the ruins in ways that strip them

39 TsDA, f. 275, op. 6, a.e. 65, l. 3.

40 Personal communication of Olga Manojlović-Pintar.

of their previous Marxian undergirding."[41] The national Auschwitz pavilions of the former socialist countries, which cemented the vision of antifascists solely as communists, political prisoners, and protesting workers, became outdated. In the radically new political context, the narrative of suffering presented by the Bulgarian Auschwitz pavilion became inadequate, given its emphasis on Bulgarian communists in the antifascist fight after World War I. The image of martyrdom based exclusively on the experience of resistance fighters and leaders of the leftist underground movement proved to be unsatisfactory and inappropriate, as well as the optimistic representation of the "triumphant march of communism" built on the Soviet victory in World War II. In the 1990s, the devaluation of the Marxist interpretation of history in general, and of World War II in particular, dealt a huge blow to the representation of international communist solidarity in the battle against Nazism, which could be seen in more than one national Auschwitz pavilion.

But irrelevant Marxist historiography was not the only reason why the presence of a Bulgarian exhibition at Auschwitz became old-fashioned. A key factor in the 1990s decision to remove it completely was another—distinct and separate—tendency, namely the rise of the memory of the Holocaust and its representation in the former Nazi concentration and extermination camps. The demise of the socialist regimes across Central and Eastern Europe allowed for a reinterpretation of victimhood during World War II. The 1990s saw an emphasis on the fact that nearly 90 percent of those murdered at Auschwitz were Jewish. Yet although the events of 1989 helped this tendency acquire legitimacy and ultimately win the struggle over the memory and representation of World War II, they neither engendered it nor were instrumental in its rapid consolidation. The understanding that Jews were the main victims of Nazi politics—and also of Nazi concentration and extermination camps—started gaining ground in the 1970s, quickly advancing and solidifying in the next decade. The resurrection of Holocaust imagery owed to the intensification of the Arab-Israeli conflict after 1967 and American Jews' increased interest in such imagery as a means of fostering Jewish identity. The switch in interpretation generated a subsequent shift in representation and secured the centrality of the Holocaust in commemorations of victims of World War II. This historiographic and visual revision culminated in the establishment of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington in 1993, which set the stage

41 James Young, quoted in Amalia Rosenblum, "Time in the Museum, the Museum in Time: The History of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum," *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 19, no. 1 (2001): 47.

for Holocaust memorials to become a veritable genre, to be replicated on a global scale.

In this context, Bulgaria no longer had a rationale for holding a pavilion at the Auschwitz museum. The country had saved the 48,000 Bulgarian Jews during World War II, while the 11,343 Yugoslav and Greek Jews from Vardar Macedonia, Pirot, and Western Thrace—occupied by Bulgaria since 1941—were deported to Treblinka extermination camp.[42] The shift in attention to the commemoration of Jewish victims who perished in the Auschwitz concentration camp meant that Bulgaria no longer deserved a place among the national pavilions. The present lack of a Bulgarian exhibit there cogently reflects the transformation in the regimes of memory and representation of World War II and victimhood in the last three or four decades.

The Post-1989 Metamorphoses of Block No. 18: Ground Floor—Awaiting the Greek National Exhibition

It is hard to establish exactly when the Bulgarian national exhibition was removed from the Auschwitz museum. In October 1989, Jean-Charles Szurek saw it in Block No. 18 and called it "the biggest caricature of all [national exhibitions]," for it "narrated the history of communism in this country since the late nineteenth century until the 1970s without mentioning Auschwitz at all, not even alluding to it." It was also the sole exposition, Szurek added, where the visitor could find a citation from Leonid Brezhnev.[43] In 1992, Jonathan Webber

42 Rumen Avramov, *"Spasenie" i padenie. Mikroikonomika na dărzhavniya antisemitizăm v Bălgariya, 1940–1944* (Sofia: Universitetsko izdatelstvo "Sv. Kliment Okhridski," 2012), 13. For more on the history of Bulgarian Jews during World War II, on the debate whether they were indeed saved or simply managed to survive, and on the claims that these historical events were unique, see Alexander Vezenkov, "Spasyavaneto na bălgarskite evrei—unikalno li e naistina? (Părva chast)," *Liberalen Pregled*, October 18, 2013, http://www.librev.com/index.php/discussion-bulgaria-publisher/2200-2013-10-18-08-56-00; Joseph Benatov, "Debating the Fate of Bulgarian Jews during World War II," in *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe*, eds. John-Paul Himka and Joanna Beata Michlic (University of Nebraska, 2013); Larisa Dubova and Georgiy Chernyavskiy, *Opyt bedy i vyzhivaniya. Sud'ba evreev Bolgarii v gody Vtoroy mirovoy voyny* (Sofia: AI "Prof. Marin Drinov," 2007); Frederick Chary, *The Bulgarian Jews and the Final Solution, 1940–1944* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972).

43 Jean-Charles Szurek, "Le camp-musée d'Auschwitz," in *À l'Est la mémoire retrouvée*, eds. Alain Brossat, Sonia Combe, Jean-Yves Potel, and Jean-Charles Szurek (Paris: La Découverte, 1990), 556. Brezhnev's quote could be rivaled only by the photo of Stalin

still found it there: he observed that the Auschwitz museum had authorized a "series of half a dozen barracks to be used as national exhibitions, and thus there is a Polish exhibition, a Soviet exhibition, a Czechoslovak, a Bulgarian, a French, an Italian, a Belgian, an Austrian, a Dutch, a Hungarian, a Yugoslav, a Danish exhibition (and formerly also an East German one)."[44] Like their GDR counterpart, the Danish and Bulgarian pavilions are no longer there. Around the same time (1992), proposals even circulated to remove the national pavilions altogether.[45]

During the next two decades, while some national expositions were taken down, others underwent radical transformations. In 2002, the Czechoslovak exhibition was split into Czech and Slovak pavilions. That same year, on the initiative of Croatia, the first steps were taken to dismantle the Yugoslav exposition in Block No. 17, which was finally closed in 2009. Nataša Mataušić of the Croatian History Museum cited as a main reason for the closure the dissolution of Yugoslavia as a state and the ideological leaning of the previous Yugoslav exhibition, which glorified the role of the Communist Party and relegated to the background all other participants in the antifascist resistance. But she also criticized the incorrect data there, such as the number of victims at the Jasenovac concentration camp and the use of the term "Yugoslav prisoners" in Auschwitz-Birkenau instead of "inmates from Yugoslavia."[46] Although initially Croatia and Slovenia had expressed a desire to use exhibition space outside Block No. 17 if the opportunity arose, since 2011 a new joint exhibit has

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in the Czechoslovak pavilion, the only such picture in the whole museum, as Szurek emphasizes. Szurek's judgment on the Auschwitz museum is harsh—he sees it as a "place without memory," a "museum without memory," because "the antifascist international conception had diluted the concrete memory of the deportation" (ibid., 556, 561).

44 Jonathan Webber, *The Future of Auschwitz: Some Personal Reflections* (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, 1992), 14. Webber considered the national pavilions "a difficulty" in commemoration, a context in which "the Jewish exhibition in Block 27 represents just one more national exhibition, paralleling the presentation of Jews as just one nation alongside the twenty-eight nations from among whom the victims were drawn—an approach to reality which is disturbing, to say the least" (ibid.). Webber also observed that as late as the mid-1980s, Auschwitz exhibitions failed to specify that the Jews constituted 90 percent of the victims, employing the "useful device" of "alphabetization of the nationalities" (ibid., 10).

45 Theresa Swiebocka, "Changes at the Auschwitz Museum and its Future," *Bulletin Trimestriel de la Fondation Auschwitz* (1992): 45–48.

46 Nataša Mataušić, "Renewing the 'Ex-Yugoslav' Pavilion in State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau," presentation at the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, 2013 Toronto meeting, https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/toronto-predavanje.pdf.

been underway, prepared by experts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Serbia, under the auspices of UNESCO.[47]

Now all of Block No. 17 is closed for renovation, making it possible for the Austrian exposition—designed largely by Auschwitz survivors, occupying the ground floor since the late 1970s, and unchanged since then—to be renewed as well. In 2013, Austria placed a banner at the entrance of its Auschwitz pavilion acknowledging that:

> Austria's role in the National Socialist regime as currently portrayed by the Austrian national exhibition, which opened in March 1978, does not correspond with the historical and the political identity of present-day Austria. For years now, people in Austria have been calling for the Austrian exhibition to be renewed in keeping with the modern culture of remembrance. Particularly the theory "Austria—the first victim of National Socialism" which is propagated in the exhibition, coupled with the failure to address the question of Austrian complicity, is no longer accepted today.[48]

By 1997, the Bulgarian national exhibition was removed, probably before and during the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Auschwitz museum's establishment, since Volume 7 of the Auschwitz museum information bulletin *Pro Memoria*—dedicated to the anniversary—does not list it among the existing national pavilions. The ground floor of Block No. 18 is currently a service space. It contains no exhibition, only its lavatories are open to museum visitors, and some of its rooms are used for preservation work.

Yet this space was not intended to remain an auxiliary maintenance space. It was given to Greece, which never before had a national pavilion at Auschwitz,

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47 Ibid. Mataušić writes that since Macedonian and Montenegrin Jews were killed not in Auschwitz but in Treblinka, the joint exhibition should also account for the broader context of persecution policies in the former Yugoslavia during World War II.

48 Hannah Lessing, "Austrian National Exhibition: The Renovation of Block 17 and the Replacement of the First Austrian National Exhibition from 1978," presentation at the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, 2013 Toronto meeting, https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/austria_presentation_sammelmappe.pdf. One of the thorniest problems in the history of national expositions at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum concerned the transformation of the USSR pavilion into a Russian pavilion, which could not open for a decade, after it became the kernel of a bitter conflict with Poland over the citizenship of Holocaust victims; it was finally inaugurated in 2013.

despite the fact that 67,000 Greek Jews, or 86 percent of the Jews of Greece, perished in the Holocaust, the overwhelming majority of them Thessaloniki Jews exterminated at Auschwitz.[49] It was not until the first decade of the twenty-first century that the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and especially the then foreign minister, Dora Bakoyannis (2006–2009), launched the initiative to install a permanent Greek exhibition in the Auschwitz museum "to honor the memory of the Holocaust victims."[50] In early 2008, a bilateral Greek-Polish agreement was signed to establish a permanent Greek exhibition at the Auschwitz museum. A National Committee in charge of the Greek exhibition at Auschwitz was formed, consisting of eight persons, including representatives of the Greek Foreign Ministry and of the Central Jewish Board, the president of the Jewish Museum of Greece, a Holocaust survivor from the Auschwitz camp, a representative of the National Resistance Movement, the Greek ambassador to Warsaw, and a film director.[51] Appointed to head the National Committee was Photini Tomai (-Constantopoulou), director of the Service of Diplomatic and Historical Archives at the Greek Foreign Ministry, and special envoy for Holocaust issues. Responsible for the state documentation on the Holocaust, she is also a member of the Greek delegation at the International Task Force for Holocaust, Education, Remembrance and Research and national representative at the International Committee of the International Tracing Service.

The belatedness in the establishment of the Greek national pavilion at the Auschwitz-Birkenau museum resulted from the belatedness of research on the Holocaust in Greece and even more so of its visual representation and museification. Odette Varon-Vassard says that the memory of the Greek Holocaust began taking shape five decades after World War II, namely "fifteen years after its emergence at international level," and that this delay comprised all forms of memory—personal testimonies, historiography, the design of monuments, and education.[52] While the international scene witnessed an outpouring of memoirs of extermination camp survivors as well as academic reflection on the Holocaust in the 1980s, these trends were not manifested in Greece until the 1990s. Varon-Vassard finds the reasons for this in the silence that enveloped topics like the World War II resistance movement in Greece and the subsequent civil war and, for that matter, the whole history of the

49 Photini Tomai, *Greeks in Auschwitz-Birkenau* (Athens: Papazisis Publishers, 2009), 19.

50 Ibid., 13.

51 http://www.holocausttaskforce.org/membercountries/member-greece.html.

52 Odette Varon-Vassard, "The Nazi Genocide of Greek Jews," in *Young People in the Maelstrom of Occupied Greece: The Persecution and Holocaust of the Jewish People, 1943–1944* (Athens: Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, 2009), 120–121.

1940s—especially during the 1967–1974 rule of the military junta. The tragic fate of the Greek Jewish communities was further marginalized by the nationalist patriotic language of school manuals and, above all, by placing Orthodoxy at the heart of Greek identity.

Even personal testimonies were late to appear in Greece. The first to be published was that of Myriam Novitch, a Greek Auschwitz survivor, in 1985, when it was translated into Greek from the original edition in French, which appeared in Paris in 1967. Odette Varon-Vassard notes that this edition was still not a publishing house venture but a product of the Greece-Israel Friendship Association, meant to be circulated among Jews and not able to attract mainstream attention.[53] Indicative of the political atmosphere in which these Jewish narratives functioned and Holocaust memory started to consolidate was the fact that Novitch's memoir was translated into Greek three years after the first socialist Greek government recognized the resistance movement, enacting Law No. 1285/1982 on Recognition of Resistance of the Greek People against the Occupation Troops, 1941–1944.[54] A few more years had to pass until the concomitant explosion in memoirs about the Civil War—"the ultimate Greek trauma"—subsided and allowed the emergence of other types of memoirs, namely those of the Greek Jewish genocide.[55]

Since the 1990s, more than twenty testimonies of Greek Jewish survivors—chiefly from Thessaloniki—have appeared in Greece, as well as a rising number of academic inquiries discussing the annihilation of Greek Jews, authored by both foreign scholars and their Greek colleagues. The first documentaries were also made, which contributed to the involvement of larger publics in the debates on the Holocaust.[56] After the mid-1990s and more commonly since 2000, Holocaust memorials—obelisks, statues, and plaques—started to appear in various Greek cities and towns from Thessaloniki to Volos to Komotini and Didymoteicho.[57] However, as Mark Mazower has shown, their eventual location revealed the municipalities' continuing discomfort with commemorating the suffering of the Greek Jews. Commenting on the Holocaust memorial

53 Ibid., 121.

54 Odette Varon-Vassard, "Témoignages dans les Balkans des années '40. Voix de femmes: témoignages de jeunes filles juives grecques survivantes du génocide," paper presented at INALCO, Paris, November 22–23, 2013, unpublished manuscript, 3. Some privately wrote memoirs immediately upon their return home but neither published nor publicized them, such as Lisa Pincas, who came back from Auschwitz.

55 Odette Varon-Vassard, "L'émergence d'une mémoire difficile," text presented at the Greek Delegation of UNESCO conference on January 27, 2014, unpublished manuscript, 12.

56 Varon-Vassard, "The Nazi Genocide of Greek Jews," 123.

57 Ibid., 124.

unveiled in Salonika in 1997, he wrote that the proposal to erect the monument in the city center had been rejected in favor of a distant suburban intersection on the road to the airport, "unknown to all but the most experienced taxi drivers."[58] The double silence on the Holocaust—maintained by Greek historiography and Greek society alike—was interrupted with increasing frequency in the beginning of the twenty-first century. A national Holocaust Day was adopted in 2004, and the first references to the extermination of Greek Jews appeared in textbooks in 2007.[59]

The end of the 1990s and the beginning of the twenty-first century were also important in fostering the efforts at museification of the memory of the Greek Jews' annihilation. In 1997, the Jewish Museum of Greece, which was established in Athens in 1977 in a small room adjacent to the capital's synagogue, moved to its current home—a new and larger building that provided far more exhibition space. In 2001, the Jewish Museum in Thessaloniki opened, in a Jewish building that had housed the Bank of Athens and the Jewish newspaper *L'Indépendent* and which was renovated by the Organization Cultural Capital of Europe Thessaloniki 1997. Both museums dedicate a room to the Greek experience of Nazi extermination camps.

The deportation of Greek Jews during World War II was visualized in the first site of the Jewish Museum in Athens; the exhibit was arranged—"in the traditional manner of an exposition"—by the former director of the Jewish Museum of Greece, Nikos Stavroulakis.[60] It contained what is known as the "Bulgarian hoard"—belongings of the 4,200 Greek Jews of Western Thrace, deported by the Bulgarian government that occupied the region in 1941, after becoming an ally of the Axis powers. The Greek Holocaust started from this region: in early March 1943, Jews from Serres, Drama, Kavala, Xanthi, Komotini, and Alexandroupolis were sent by train through Gorna Dzhumaya to Lom, then by boat to Vienna, and from there to Treblinka extermination camp in Poland.[61] Before they boarded the trains, the Bulgarian authorities stripped

58 Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2005), 438.

59 Odette Varon-Vassard, "Le génocide des juifs grecs: histoire, mémoire et historiographie," unpublished manuscript, pp. 20, 22–23.

60 Odette Varon-Vassard, "Pour une problématique des Musées de la période de l'occupation nazie ('41–'45). Modèle européen—modèle americain," in *The Contemporary Museum within the Postmodern Era*, eds. Stephanos Rozanis and Yannis Thanassekos (Athens and Brussels: The Jewish Museum of Greece / La Fondation Auschwitz, 1996), 109.

61 On the recent Greek and Bulgarian historiography of these processes, see Vasilis Ritzaleos, "Bulgarian Foreign Policy and the Deportation of Greek Jews during World War II," in *La Shoah en Europe du Sud-Est: les Juifs en Bulgarie et dans les terres sous administration bulgare* (*1941–1944*). Actes du colloque des 9 et 10 juin 2013, éditions du Mémorial

FIGURE 8.3 *The "Bulgarian hoard" at the Jewish Museum of Greece, Athens.*
PHOTO: ROSSITZA GUENTCHEVA, 2014.

them of their jewelry and valuables—golden eyeglasses and watches, silver boxes, cups, and napkin rings— and confiscated their currency and bonds. These belongings were returned to the Greek state after World War II, upon the foundation of a socialist regime in Bulgaria.[62] Some of them are now exhibited in the Shoah room of the Jewish Museum of Greece behind a glass window built into the wall.[63]

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de la Shoah, ed. Nadège Ragaru, 111–119, http://www.memorialdelashoah.org/index.php/fr/programme-des-activites/colloques/actes-de-colloques; Alexander Vezenkov, "Spasyavaneto na bălgarskite evrei—unikalno li e naistina? (Vtora chast)," *Liberalen Pregled* (July 25, 2014), http://www.librev.com/index.php/discussion-bulgaria-publisher/2443-2014-07-25-13-29-15; Nadja Danova, "La déportation des juifs des territoires sous administration bulgare: savoir et mémoire en Bulgarie actuelle sur le mois de mars 1943," in *La Shoah en Europe du Sud-Est*, 120–130; Liljana Dejanova, "The 'Non-Saved Jews': Recent Controversies and Political Uses in the Bulgarian Public Space," in *La Shoah en Europe du Sud-Est*, 162–172; Nadia Danova and Rumen Avramov, eds., *Deportiraneto na evreite ot Vardarska Makedoniya, Belomorska Trakiya i Pirot, mart 1943. Dokumenti ot bălgarskite arhivi*, 2 vols. (Sofia: Obedineni izdateli, 2013); Nadia Danova, "La Bulgarie et l'Holocauste: état des recherches sur le problème et perspectives," *Etudes Balkaniques* 4 (2012): 18–44.

62 No such items were returned by Germany, which carried out the deportations from Thessaloniki and the neighboring regions, "Old Greece," and the Greek islands.

63 A documentary exhibition designed by the Central State Archives in Sofia, "dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the rescue of the Bulgarian Jews," pays more than a scant tribute to the deportation of 11,343 Jews from Vardar Macedonia and Western Thrace, among

The Shoah room at the Jewish Museum of Greece also displays personal belongings of the Holocaust victims from the time of their ordeal at the concentration camps. A uniform worn by a Salonika Jew in Auschwitz stands next to other pieces of clothing—cap, gloves, vest, socks—as well as hospital bed sheets and enamel bowls and cups used by Greek Jewish inmates at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Also exhibited are artifacts testifying to the creativity and everyday endurance of the Greek prisoners. Among them are handwritten notes on paper and cloth by Jews from the Haidari concentration camp in Athens awaiting deportation to Auschwitz, postcards sent from Auschwitz inmates to relatives in Switzerland, and drawings and cloth towels made in Auschwitz. There are also socks knitted by the victims in Bergen-Belsen and clogs, a boat, and a pistol that they carved out of wood. Suffering and strength are individualized by indicating the authors and owners of almost all objects, which have been donated to the museum by either camp survivors or their relatives and heirs.

This implicit presence of the survivors[64]—only hinted at—stands behind an otherwise widespread curatorial urge to exhibit authentic objects from the Holocaust. The solidarity of the Greek Orthodox population is depicted in a poster naming the Greek Righteous among the Nations and in another one—"Zakynthos—the Island of the Righteous"—narrating the story of the Ionian

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whom there were 4,200 Greek Jews. The catalogue of the exhibition consists of seventy-nine pages of documents and photos testifying to the saving of the 48,000 Bulgarian Jews, of which only two comment on the 11,343 martyrs deported to Treblinka and exterminated there. See *1943. Tough Choices That Make Difference: The Fate of the Bulgarian Jews. A Documentary Exhibition* (Sofia: Archives State Agency, 2013), 60–61. Another documentary exhibition, designed by the Cultural Institute of the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, opened in 2008 under the title "The Power of Civil Society: The Fate of Jews in Bulgaria." It consists of twenty-one posters with documents and photographs, one of which comments on the deportation of Jews from the territories occupied by Bulgaria during World War II and explains it by the lack of viable (Bulgarian) civil society there. It says: "In the icy March nights of 1943, the defenseless Jewish people in the New Lands is brutally and mercilessly expelled from their homes . . . never to return again . . . Bulgarian civil society, along with its traditions and culture, only existed within the traditional borders of Bulgaria, not in the New Lands." http://sic.mfa.bg/?act=galleries&rec=1240&sql_which=0. See a reference to the 2008 exhibition in Stefan Troebst, "Spasenie, deportirane ili Holokost? Polemikite predi i sled 1989 g. otnosno sădbata na bălgarskite evrei po vreme na Vtorata svetovna voina," in *Istoriya, mitologiya, politika*, eds. Daniela Koleva and Kostadin Grozev (Sofia: UI "Sv. Kliment Ohridski," 2010), 509.

64 On witnesses being by definition survivors, and on the lacuna in testimony, see Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive* (New York: Zone Books, 1999), 33.

island that saved all of its Jews. Temporary exhibitions at the Jewish Museum of Greece have a similar emphasis: in 2003–2005, the museum arranged an exhibition on Jewish children hidden by Greek Orthodox people in occupied Greece, while in 2013, an exhibition entitled "*Synagonistis*: Greek Jews in the National Resistance" honored "those who never wore the yellow star."[65] And while both touch on extremely interesting and previously under-researched topics, like the interplay of different identities during childhood and Jews who took up arms against the Nazis, they do talk about rescue too.

The visual approach at the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki appears close to that of the Jewish Museum of Greece, although its Holocaust room focuses specifically on the genocide of the Jews of Thessaloniki. Although scholars differ on the precise figure of the Salonika Jews exterminated in the Nazi death camps, the museum speaks of 48,533 Jews from the city being deported between March and August 1943 by the German command to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where 77 percent of them were gassed immediately upon arrival.[66] Around 1,000 of those deported survived and returned to Thessaloniki after World War II. Thus 96 percent of the prewar Salonika Jewish community—by far the biggest in Greece—was annihilated.

Scholars of the war maintain that the Holocaust affected the Jewish communities in the Greek state in different ways. George Mavrogordatos speaks of two Jewish minorities in Greece: the assimilated Jews of Old Greece—the Greek-speaking Romaniot Jews within Greece's pre-1912-war state borders—and the mostly unassimilated Ladino-speaking Sephardic Jews of the New Lands, annexed after 1912, living mainly in Northern Greece (Macedonia and Thrace) and the Dodecanese islands of Rhodes and Kos (part of Greece since 1947). While Romaniot Jews identified as Greek, were perceived as Greek, and were considered a religious minority, the Sephardic Jews regarded themselves, and were regarded by others, as non-Greek, thus constituting a national minority. The two communities suffered sharply differing rates of deportation and extermination. While in Old Greece 47 percent were deported and losses amounted to 51 percent, in the New Lands 83 percent were deported and losses reached a staggering 96 percent. Mavrogordatos saw this difference as a

65 See the catalog *Hidden Children in Occupied Greece* (Jewish Museum of Greece, 2007) and the newspaper-format publication *Synagonistis: Greek Jews in the National Resistance* (Jewish Museum of Greece, n.d.).

66 Several hundred Salonika Jews who were Spanish citizens were deported to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, from where they went to Palestine after World War II. See Varon-Vassard, "Le génocide des juifs grecs," 3.

FIGURE 8.4 *The Holocaust of the Jews of Thessaloniki room, Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki.*
PHOTO: ROSSITZA GUENTCHEVA, 2014.

contrast between two cities, Athens and Thessaloniki.[67] Taking the distinction further, Odette Varon-Vassard called Athens a city of rescue and Thessaloniki a city of deportation and extermination.[68]

This internal map of the Greek Holocaust produces different accounts of the extermination of Greek Jews during World War II. The "Athens narrative," stressing the solidarity of the Greek Orthodox population, tells about the

67 George Mavrogordatos, "The Holocaust in Greece: A Vindication of Assimilation," *Etudes Balkaniques* 4 (2012): 6, 7, 10.

68 Varon-Vassard, "Le génocide des juifs grecs," 12.

possibility of saving Jewish lives through concealment, strong ties between Jews and non-Jews, and the help of the local municipal and religious authorities. The "Thessaloniki story" engenders uneasy questions about the general indifference of the local Greek Orthodox community, at times bordering on complicity and collaboration, and even open hostility, extortion, and denunciation. The guilt of Thessaloniki over the nearly complete destruction of its centuries-old Jewish community serves as an additional explanation for the belated opening of the Holocaust debate in Greece and its visualization.[69]

The two distinct narratives of the Greek genocide during World War II—the different fate of the Greek Jewish communities in "Old Greece" and in the "New Territories"—might have been responsible for the further delay in the opening of the Greek Auschwitz pavilion. The official agreement with the Auschwitz state museum stipulated that the "works will be finalized by the autumn of year 2009, when the opening ceremony is scheduled to take place."[70] In 2009, Dora Bakoyannis, the Greek minister of foreign affairs, stated that the permanent Greek exhibition—"The Holocaust of the Greeks"—would be inaugurated in 2010.[71] In April 2011, a lecture by Photini Tomai entitled "The Permanent Greek Exhibition at the Auschwitz Museum," held at the Greek Press and Communications Office at the Permanent Mission of Greece to the UN in New York, included a "video presentation of the state-of-the-art, beautifully designed

69 Mavrogordatos, "The Holocaust in Greece," 11–18; Varon-Vassard, "Le génocide des juifs grecs," 7–8, 23. A multitude of processes conditioned the almost complete extermination of the Sephardic Jews of Thessaloniki. Some of these processes involved a specific feature of this community: the determination of the young Jews to remain with their families and not join the resistance movement, which was a mechanism of escape in central and southern Greece (particularly when the movement gained strength in 1944). The lack of assimilation was due in part to the high concentration of Thessaloniki's Jewish community, which until World War I constituted a majority and at the beginning of World War II was one-fifth of the population. It was also due to the segregation in separate districts, especially after the devastating fire of 1917, and to the fact that Salonika Jews were originally exempted from the Greek army and few joined the Greek school system until the mid-1930s. Yet other processes were also instrumental in inciting anti-Jewish sentiment, like the resettlement of 100,000 Greek Christian refugees from Turkey in the 1920s and the fleeing of Greeks from the Bulgarian occupation zone after 1941. These populations desperately needed shelter and would welcome the emptying of Jewish houses that could be confiscated. Even before the anti-Semitic press became well established in the early 1940s, the city saw its first interwar anti-Jewish pogrom with the torching of a Jewish district in 1931 (ibid.).

70 http://www.mfa.gr/en/diplomatic-and-historical-archives/news-service-of-diplomatic-and-historical-archives/agreement-with-the-auschwitz-museum.html.

71 Tomai, *Greeks in Auschwitz-Birkenau*, 13.

museum to be installed at Auschwitz's Barrack 18."[72] In the lecture, Tomai indicated that the phase of restoration and repair of the ground floor of Block No. 18 had been completed and the design plan had been submitted for approval for a second time, after "some required corrections" suggested by the International Council.[73] Before guiding the audience through the 3D projection of the exhibition space, Tomai mentioned that the book *Greeks in Auschwitz-Birkenau* "filled in some of the 'pixels' of knowledge relative to [the] Holocaust of the Greeks for the international community."[74] Aside from the exhibition title, the book contains two references to the permanent exhibition: that it is intended "to preserve the memory of the Greeks (for the most part Jewish) who fell victim to the Holocaust" and that the video-recorded accounts of three Christian Greeks would be displayed there too.[75] Although the Greek Auschwitz exhibition appears to have been ready in 2011, as of this writing, it is still not installed in Block No. 18.[76]

The Post-1989 Metamorphoses of Block No. 18: First Floor—The Hungarian National Exhibition

While the ground floor of Block No. 18 has been empty for around two decades, the barrack's first floor features one of the oldest national pavilions—that of Hungary, which has occupied this space continuously since 1960. Paying tribute "to the memory of the 400,000 Hungarian victims," the 1960 exposition combined documents and photos hanging on the walls with artistic works that greatly impressed the representatives of the National Museum of the Revolutionary Movement in Sofia. An elaborate official exposition was set there in 1965, prepared by the Hungarian Museum of the Workers' Movement. Of its 120 panels, only ten featured documents relating to the Hungarian Jewish victims in Auschwitz, while the rest emphasized the antifascist victims, "preferably the non-Jewish communists."[77] Its principles of exhibition were followed

72 http://forward.com/articles/137188/at-last-a-permanent-greek-exhibition-at-the-ausch/.

73 http://www.greeknewsonline.com/the-permanent-greek-exhibition-at-the-auschwitz-memorial/.

74 Ibid.

75 Tomai, *Greeks in Auschwitz-Birkenau*, 23, 189.

76 I asked Photini Tomai for permission to see the draft exhibition and the materials used during the preparation of the Greek Auschwitz pavilion but did not receive it.

77 István Rév, "Auschwitz 1945–1989 (rekonstrukció)," *Élet és Irodalom* 19 (2004). This is Rév's opening speech of the 2004 exhibition at Galéria Centrális of the Open Society Archives, reconstructing the Hungarian pavilions in the Auschwitz museum from before 1989, http://w3.osaarchivum.org/galeria/auschwitz/files/pages/revdoc.html. For a virtual tour

to a great extent in the 1979–1980 renovation of the Hungarian pavilion; the exposition was dedicated "in memory of 400,000 Hungarian Auschwitz victims as a permanent reminder for the living." And although it already contained the names of the victims and for the first time references to the Holocaust of the Hungarian Roma, it placed more blame on Germany for the deportations and exterminations. The exhibit also featured excerpts from the World War II Hungarian press, selected and arranged according to the communist-era interpretation of those events and the role of the Communist Party.

When Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán visited the pavilion in 1998, he found the 1979–1980 exhibition there "both inappropriate and neglected," prompting the Hungarian Ministry of Culture to launch an initiative to replace it.[78] Initially, the ministry planned only to reconstruct the exhibition, yet it eventually opted to create a new one, to be inaugurated on May, 9, 2000, by the prime minister. The ministry's representatives assigned the task to the Hungarian National Museum, which appointed as chief curator the head of the museum's Contemporary History Division, István Ihász. He was to be assisted by a committee of three experts: an adviser to the prime minister, a historian from the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and the chief rabbi of Hungary.

In 1999, a draft version was prepared and forwarded to five specialists for review, including the curator of the Hungarian Auschwitz exhibition of 1979–1980, Emil Horn. All five reviews were scathing, maintaining that the draft falsified the history of the Jews of Hungary and of their Holocaust and rehabilitated the Horthy era "by transferring virtually all responsibility for whatever crimes were committed in Hungary almost exclusively to the Germans."[79] As a result, the chief rabbi resigned from the committee. Furthermore, the Association of the Jewish Communities in Hungary said the draft minimized the Holocaust and was tacitly anti-Semitic, and it threatened an international scandal. After being accused of "denationalization" (assigning the Germans sole responsibility for the Holocaust) as well as "generalization" (treating the tragedy of the Jews as part of the general consequences of war, in which others suffered too), the draft was withheld and eventually dropped altogether.[80]

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of the reconstructed expositions from the pre-1989 Hungarian pavilion at the Auschwitz museum, see http://w3.osaarchivum.org/galeria/auschwitz/.

78 Randolph Braham, "Hungary: The Assault on the Historical Memory of the Holocaust," http://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20140318-Holocaust-in-Hungary-Braham-Assault-on-Historical-Memory.pdf, 14.

79 Ibid., 16.

80 Ibid., 17.

The current exhibition at the Hungarian Auschwitz pavilion opened on April 15, 2004. Entitled "The Citizen Betrayed: In Memory of the Victims of the Hungarian Holocaust," it was curated by a team consisting of Gábor Kádár, László Rajk, Zoltán Vági, and László Varga, and was designed by László Rajk—a famous dissident from the communist era, member of the Hungarian Parliament in the early 1990s, architect, film production designer, and professor at the University of Theater and Film Arts in Budapest. In his opening speech, the Hungarian minister of education, Bálint Magyar, emphasized:

> the Holocaust was also a Hungarian tragedy, for its every tenth victim—that is more than half a million Hungarian Jews and Roma—were killed as Hungarian citizens. We must never forget that every third victim of the largest Nazi extermination camp was deported from Hungary by the Hungarian authorities under the orders of a Hungarian government that assisted the Nazis. There are no graves at Auschwitz-Birkenau, and yet this place is nevertheless the largest Hungarian cemetery in our history.[81]

The exhibition consists of nine thematic sections: One in Ten; Forced-Labor Service; Violation of Rights, Expropriation of Assets; The German Occupation; Ghettoization, Deportation; Hungarian Jews in Auschwitz-Birkenau; Roma Holocaust; The Arrow Cross Regime; and Rescue and Resistance. It points out that 437,000 Jews were deported from Hungary to Auschwitz-Birkenau between May and July 1944, in the space of only 56 days, in a pace unprecedented in the history of the Holocaust, and that all that could never have happened without the collaboration of the Hungarian government and the practically complete passivity of the non-Jewish Hungarian population.[82]

The exposition features documents, photographs, maps, and objects, yet the way they are presented differs substantially from the standard manner of exhibiting such artifacts and especially from the main Auschwitz exposition that is found in blocks No. 4, 5, 6, 7, and 11. The general exposition in Auschwitz-Birkenau, almost unchanged since 1955, emphasizes authenticity by recreating a crematorium ("with original German metal parts") and, above all, by exhibiting material proof of genocide—objects belonging to the victims and found after the liberation of the camp. Tons of shoes, suitcases, glasses, prayer shawls, bowls, toothbrushes, shaving brushes, artificial limbs, human hair, and mountains of empty Zyklon B canisters are placed behind glass win-

81 *The Citizen Betrayed: In Memory of the Victims of the Hungarian Holocaust* (Budapest: Hungarian National Museum, 2006), 19.

82 Ibid., 29.

dows, serving both as evidence of extermination and as visual reminder of the loss of millions of human lives.

The Hungarian pavilion does not exhibit such objects. László Rajk questions the widely accepted museographic principle of using objects to represent human beings, particularly the victims of mass murder, when the sheer amount of objects is intended to stand for the staggering absence of millions of people.[83] In Rajk's view, neither the immensity of the crime nor the enormous loss of human life could be represented through the piles of everyday belongings and objects unless they were personalized and identified. László Rajk says:

> The permanent Hungarian exhibition in Auschwitz appears as a fragment of the present in the space of the past surrounding it. The past comprises Block No. 18 of the one-time death camp of Auschwitz. The building itself is the objective reality. It bears testimony to all the horrors that happened there and everything that followed. That is, it is a segment of the past that we have accepted as the embodiment of an awful tragedy. This is the only "exhibit" in the Hungarian exhibition.[84]

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83 This principle was questioned by James Young as early as the beginning of the 1990s. After having seen the "floor to ceiling piles of prosthetic limbs, eyeglasses, toothbrushes, suitcases, and the shorn hair of women" in the Auschwitz general exhibition, the author asked: "What precisely does the sight of concentration-camp artifacts awaken in viewers? Historical knowledge? A sense of evidence? Revulsion, grief, pity, fear? That visitors respond more directly to objects than to verbalized concepts is clear. But beyond affect, what does our knowledge of these objects—a bent spoon, children's shoes, crusty old striped uniforms—have to do with our knowledge of historical events? More specifically, what do we understand of the killers and victims through their remnants? In one way, all we see here can be construed as remnants of the killers and their deeds. [...] For when the memory of a people and its past are reduced to the bits and rags of their belongings, memory of life itself it is lost. [...] That a murdered people remains known in Holocaust museums anywhere by their scattered belongings, and not by their spiritual works, that their lives should be recalled primarily through the images of their death, may be the ultimate travesty. [...] Indeed, by adopting such artifacts for their own memorial presentations, even the new museums in America and Europe risk perpetuating the very figures by which the killers themselves would have memorialized their Jewish victims." James Young, *Holocaust Memorials and Meaning: The Texture of Memory* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), 132–133.

84 László Rajk, "The Betrayed Citizen: On the Design of the Exhibition," in *The Citizen Betrayed: In Memory of the Victims of the Hungarian Holocaust* (Budapest: Hungarian National Museum, 2006), 187.

László Rajk has, indeed, incorporated objects in his exhibition, yet he selected them for their stark "inauthenticity." The newspapers and identity cards are made of plastic—they are deliberately inauthentic, as are the barbed wire and the candles, the shoes of the victims, and the coat of Miklós Radnóti, a Hungarian Jewish poet who perished in the Holocaust.

Nor do any of the documents, explanations, photographs, maps, and charts materialize: they are projected onto the building's wall. Even the color of the wall is a projection and is not taken for granted.[85] The host of projectors that transmit the images on the walls beam through the visitors' bodies, projecting their silhouettes sometimes among the victims and at times among the perpetrators. The accompanying texts of the narrative, and even Miklós Radnóti's poem, written days before his own death and dedicated to a friend who had perished in the death march, appear enclosed in glass cases; some of the texts are on computer screens likewise encased. A transparent wagon—a tent-like structure through which the visitor passes—does not even pretend to recreate, reproduce, or imitate the experience of being crammed in the cattle wagons used for the actual deportation. The exposition features real train tracks; however, they are placed under a glass floor so that the viewer never steps on them, as he/she is not allowed to set foot in the house of the victims. Not only does the visitor walk on a glass surface, "as though it were floating above the building floor," but this platform is at arm's length from the wall, which remains out of reach to the viewer and distant from the present.[86]

In this way the bare walls of Block No. 18 are at the heart of Holocaust remembrance—a past that can be accessed by the present only through the visitor's memories.[87] László Rajk concludes:

> We are surrounded by the past as we move on the surface designated for the present: the victim's house seems to be empty; what we see there is up

85 Presentation of László Rajk at his 2B Gallery in Budapest, comparing his design of the museum-house of Imre Nagy (done in 2008 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his murder) and of the Hungarian Auschwitz exhibition (2004), May 29, 2012.

86 Rajk, "The Betrayed Citizen," 187.

87 For the centrality of the walls in Auschwitz for remembering the Holocaust, see also Rajk's exhibition "Missing Fate: The Walls of Auschwitz" (2B Galéria, Budapest, May 2012), which he did after encountering names of Auschwitz victims engraved on the walls in various buildings of the concentration camp—barracks, kitchens, attics, latrines—on both the internal and external walls of the blocks. To commemorate the inmates who carved their names into the bricks and the plaster, Rajk created eleven walls, using *frottage*—an ancient technique of Japanese fishermen, "rendering the canvas so as to make the missing phenomenon—or rather its absence—visible." See http://missingseries.org/missing-fate--the-walls-of/missing-fate---the-walls-of/.

FIGURE 8.5 *Block No. 18, first floor: The 2004 Hungarian exhibition.* PHOTO: ROSSITZA GUENTCHEVA, 2013.

to us alone. The exhibition does not aim to enable us to "live through" the horrors of the Holocaust. Instead it builds consciousness to accompany something that emotionally is already accepted. After all, compared with actual reality—especially when surrounded by the real—an exhibition's reconstruction of reality can only be fake.[88]

88 Rajk, "The Betrayed Citizen," 188.

The last exhibit in the current Hungarian pavilion is a portion of the previous Hungarian exhibition: a detail of the 1979–1980 memorial wall for the Holocaust victims is now placed under the glass floor. It is put in the realm of the past, having already become part of the building and of the history of Block No. 18. This past is real and visible, yet the glass podium makes it inaccessible and, above all, intangible—unreachable, reflected, and mediated. Thus the Hungarian Auschwitz pavilion is not only a commemoration of the tremendous loss of human life in the Holocaust but also a commentary on the way others have already interpreted, remembered, and memorialized the Holocaust in the past several decades.

Conclusion

Focusing on the spaces of Block No. 18 has allowed us a glimpse at the fascinating trajectory of the nationalization of suffering. A decade after World War II, the national pavilions, which the socialist countries established in Nazi concentration camps as a form of commemoration, served as vehicles to commemorate the antifascist resistance and extol the advent of the new socialist order. Yet during the Cold War, especially in its early phases, the pavilions of socialist and capitalist countries alike promoted cooperation across the Iron Curtain, relying on the joint legacy of fighting against the Nazis. Paradoxically, the national pavilions—despite localizing this struggle—told a largely unified story about defeating fascism. The demise of the socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 helped de-emphasize the figure of the political prisoner as the central victim of World War II. However, the survival of the national exhibitions as a commemorative style meant that in the emerging narrative of Jewish suffering, the principle of the nationality of the victims was to be kept intact. The insistence that Jews, rather than Poles, Russians, or Hungarians—or Bulgarians, for that matter—suffered most in Auschwitz did transform the memory of fascist atrocities, replicating and extending in a singular way patterns of representation that the pre-1989 socialist countries played a substantial role in developing and perfecting.

Dissecting Block No. 18 has also shown the possibility of alternative representations of Holocaust memory simultaneously existing side by side. While both the main Auschwitz exhibition and the present Hungarian pavilion commemorate the mass murder of Jews, they do so in different ways, diverging on their understanding of authenticity and the possibility of "living through" these experiences. Wendy Brown has criticized the Holocaust section of the Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles for presenting

a single, non-interactive, authoritative narrative, "delivered at length without interruption, distraction, or choice on the part of the viewer, without featuring debate or plural points of view."[89] The national pavilions, using different strategies of representation, enable parallel images of memory to coexist within the space of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Last but not least, the examination of the national exhibitions contained within Block No. 18 demonstrates a multitude of entanglements—not only of national histories of the Holocaust but also of their commemoration and representation. Involving deportation across borders, the occupation of foreign territories, or survivors crossing political frontiers, the histories of the Holocaust are by definition transnational, and the transnational perspective is a particularly viable one when approaching this subject. It appears to be increasingly pertinent also when exploring the museification of the Holocaust and the memory thereof. Those are entanglements that link not only Balkan countries like Bulgaria, Greece, or the former Yugoslavia but other states as well—either former-socialist or capitalist ones—ranging from Hungary to Poland to Austria and Germany in Central Europe. Block No. 18 has provided a framework in which to address both the incredibly complex processes of deportation, extermination, and resistance during World War II and their equally interwoven collective remembrance.

89 Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006), chapter 5, "Tolerance as Museum Object: The Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance," 137.

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